



Heritage Audit of Kildavin (Barragh) Co. Carlow



Figure 1 The ruins of Barragh church, Kildavin

by Colm Moriarty

for the Cranavane Holy Well Committee

supported by the Heritage Council's Community Heritage Grant Scheme 2023

Reference number: CH18040

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An Chomhairle Oidhreachta
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1. Introduction

This Heritage Audit of Kildavin, Co. Carlow was commissioned by the Cranavane Holy Well Committee and was supported by the Heritage Council's Community Heritage Grant Scheme 2023 (Reference number: CH18040). It will provide a baseline study of all the monuments and heritage assets found in Kildavin and its surrounds. The audit was carried out by Colm Moriarty, who is licensed archaeologist.



Figure 2 St. Lazerian's church, Kildavin village

The audit was undertaken between May and September 2023, and it consisted of a desk-based study, field survey and a final report. It would not have been possible without the support of the landowners on whose property monuments are situated and the general public who shared information about site locations and histories. Special thanks are also due to the members of the Cranavane Holy Well Committee who were very generous with their time and knowledge.

It is hoped that the benefits of understanding and promoting the heritage of Kildavin will lead to an increase in visitors to the village and its surrounds. Heritage actions within the local area can also enhance community spirit by bringing people of diverse backgrounds together to work on various projects which will enhance the cultural and economic development of Kildavin. The understanding and promoting of heritage in an authentic manner will be beneficial to both tourists and the local community alike.



1.1 Methodology

The information and proposals provided in this report are based on documentary research, field survey and stakeholder meetings which were carried out between May and September 2023. The document is organised under a series of headings relevant to this work and the data contained within the report has been compiled from a number of sources including:

- Archaeological Survey of Ireland
- Historic mapping
- Aerial photographs available at www.osi.ie
- Archaeological excavations bulletin at www.excavations.ie
- The National Museum of Ireland's Finds Database
- Carlow County Development Plan
- Secondary sources (see bibliography)
- Field Survey
- Local information
- The School's Folklore Collections

The report has been prepared in accordance with the following guideline documents:

- 'Framework & Principles for the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage' issued by the DAHGI (1999)
- 'Architectural Heritage Protection- Guidelines for Local Authorities' issued by the DAHG (2011)



2. Site Location and Description

This Heritage Audit was carried out in Kildavin and the surrounding area. Kildavin is a small rural village in the east of Co. Carlow that has a population of just under 200 people¹. It is situated on the border with Co. Wexford and the nearest town is Bunclody, which is circa 5km to the southeast. Kildavin village is discussed below in Section 2.1, while the boundaries of the wider survey area are defined in Section 2.2.

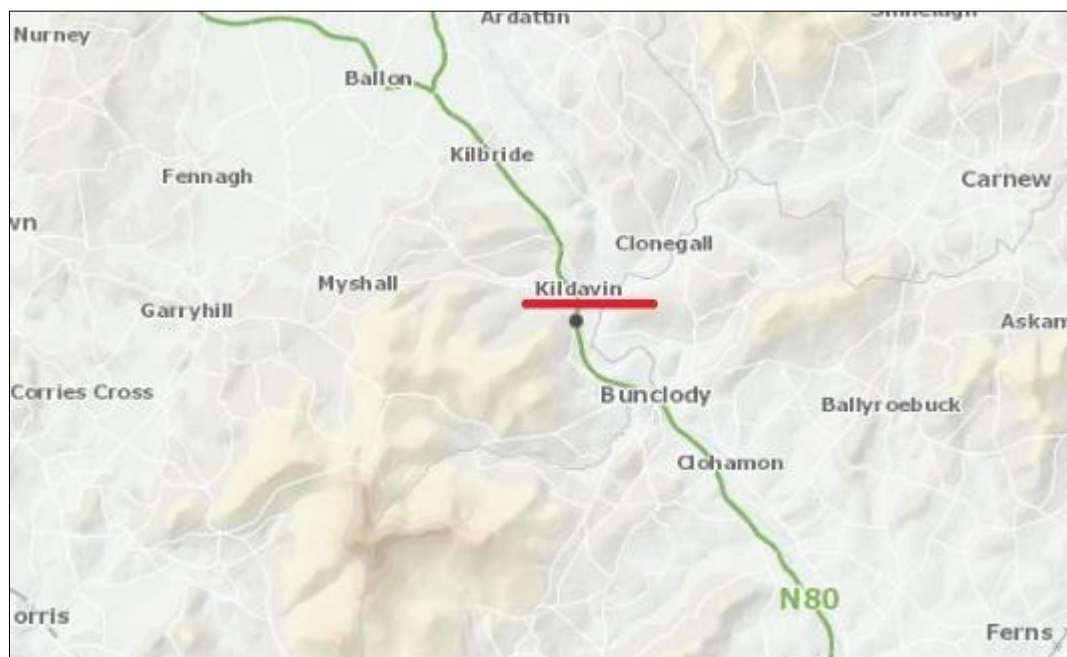


Figure 3 Location of Kildavin village

2.1 Kildavin village

Kildavin is an attractive village that is located on a staggered crossroads. It contains two churches, a public house, a hall, a national school, several 19th century buildings and some newer housing estates. The two parish churches, St. Lazerian's and St. Paul's date from the early 19th century and are located in the north and centre of the village respectively (figure 6).

The commercial centre of Kildavin is Conway's pub and this is a well-maintained premises that retains much of its traditional character and form (figure 7). A nice feature in front of the pub is the use of old granite troughs as flower planters. Although no longer open, Kinsella's shop occupies a commanding position in the centre of village (figure 10). It is a four-bay structure, with rendered walls that has a simple yet attractive composition. It is illustrated on the 1st Edition O.S. mapping, which suggests that it dates from at least the early 19th century. A boundary wall in front of the building has been ornamented with white quartz stones to pleasing affect (figure 11).

19th century cottage terraces are found along the northern and western approaches to village and these greatly add to the historic character of Kildavin. A nice feature noted in front of the cottages

¹ 2022 Census



on the northern side of the village is the use of granite steps at the front doors (figure 8). A finely built granite structure was observed on the western approach to the village and this contains a stone with the initials P. J. S. and the date 1898 inscribed on it (figure 9). This building, which contains a several blocked windows and doorways, is now a private residence. The western side of the village also contains a nice park area that was constructed on the site of an old handball alley (figure 12). A small structure located at the eastern end of this park represents part of a weighbridge that was built in 1923 (figure 13). This building was restored in 2001 and it represents an interesting architectural feature. Adjacent to the weighbridge is a small yard that contains a vernacular out-building (figure 14). This site is entered via a traditional wrought iron gate and is a reminder of Kildavin's agricultural past.

The southern approach to the village contains Spellman Hall, which is a mid-20th century building. On the opposite of the road is Kildavin House, a historic property which dates from circa 1770 (figure 15). Unfortunately, this building has been derelict for many years and is currently used as an agricultural store. It has a three-bay, two-storey façade with a granite, round-headed doorcase with side lights and a panelled door of circa 1820². A large, two-story gap has been made in the front of the building to allow items to be stored inside the house and this detracts from the structure. The fields surrounding Kildavin house contain numerous mature oak and beech trees, some of which appear to be of considerable age. These trees are visually attractive and provide an important habitat for wildlife.

Stone walls were noted throughout the village (figures 18-21). Not only are these walls visually appealing they are also testimony to the skilled craftsmen who built them. They should be retained wherever possible. The centre of the village contains an iron water pump, and this has been incorporated into a monument commemorating the 1798 Rebellion and the 1916 Rising (figure 16). This is a nice feature which enhances the village. Three display panels were also noted in village, and these provide good information on the history of the area, as well as suggested walks (figure 17).



Figure 4 Northern and western approaches to the village

² National Inventory of Architectural Heritage



Figure 5 The eastern and southern approaches to the village



Figure 6 St Lazerian's and St. Paul's



Figure 7 Conway's pub and granite trough planter



Figure 8 19th century terrace of cottages and granite steps



Figure 9 Late 19th century building and date stone



Figure 10 Kinsella's shop



Figure 11 Quartz stones along top of wall



Figure 12 Small park at the site of the old handball alley



Figure 13 Old weighbridge building



Figure 14 Vernacular farm building



Figure 15 Kildavin house and a mature oak tree



Figure 16 Cast iron water pump



Figure 17 Information panels



Figure 18 Granite stone wall in centre of village



Figure 19 Stone wall at southern end of village



Figure 20 Granite wall at eastern side of village



Figure 21 Stone wall along the southern side of the village



Figure 22 Flower bed defined by granite blocks and an ornamental area in the east of the village



2.2 The Wider Study Area (Barragh)

The village of Kildavin is located within the old civil parish of Barragh and for the purpose of this audit it was decided that this district would form the wider study area (figure22). The parish of Barragh contains 30 townlands (see Table 1) and it covers an area of approximately 53.8km². It is bounded by the river Slaney to the east, while the western part of the parish rises into the foothills of the Blackstairs Mountains. The landscape is dominated by pasture and arable farming with areas of woodland and moor found on the higher ground.

The audit revealed that Kildavin/Barragh contains at least 30 recorded monuments and these range in date from the Bronze Age to the Late Medieval period. In addition, it has rich vernacular heritage as seen by the many traditional farm buildings, stone walls, wrought iron gates and granite piers which dot the landscape.

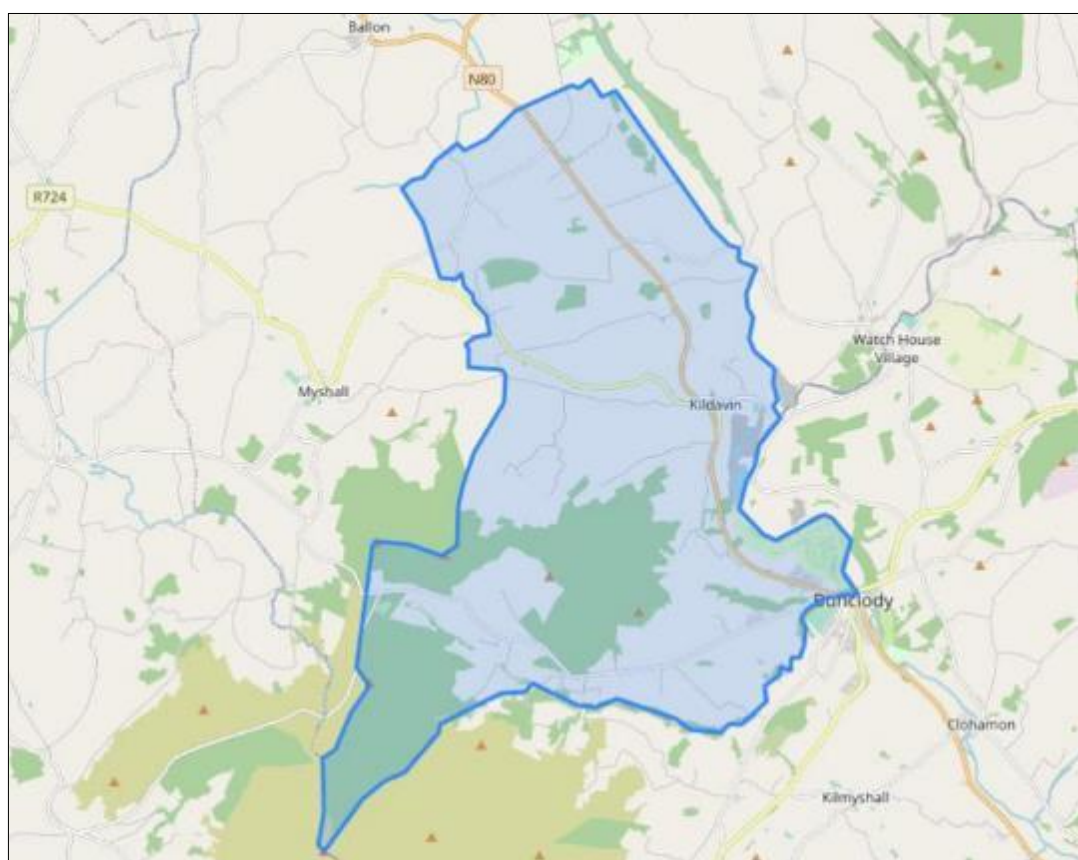


Figure 23 Outline of Barragh parish

Table 1: Townlands making up Barragh parish

| Townland | Irish Name ³ | Suggested Meaning |
|------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Kildavin | Cill Damháin | St. Davin's church |
| Ballinvally | Baile an Bhealaigh | The place/town of the road/pass |
| Ballykennan | Baile Cínín | Keenan's place/town |
| Ballypierce | Baile Phiarais | Pierce's place/town |
| Ballyshancarragh | Baile Sheáin Charraigh | Town/place of Sean's rock |

³ Source of Irish names is loganim.ie



| | | |
|--------------------|-------------------------|--|
| Barrnahask | Barr na hEasca | Top of the bog/wet area |
| Barragh | Beirreach | Height/Small hilltop |
| Boggan | An Bogán | Little soft place |
| Bunnagurragh | Bun na gCurrach | Top of the swamp/marsh |
| Carrickduff | An Charraig Dhubh | The black rock |
| Killbrannish South | Cill Bhreatnais Theas | Church of the Welsh (South) |
| Killbrannish North | Cill Bhreatnais Thuaidh | Church of the Welsh (North) |
| Kilbride | Cill Bhríde | St. Bridget's church |
| Kilgraney | Cill Ghréine | The sunny church |
| Clonmullen | Cluain Muilinn | Meadow of the mill |
| Knockbarragh | Cnoc Beirrih | Hill of the height |
| Knockdoorish | Cnoc Dúrois | Hill of the black/dark wood |
| Craan | An Corrán | Stoney place |
| Sherwood | Sherwood | Sherwood |
| Sherwood Park | Sherwood Park | Sherwood Park |
| Cranemore | An Corrán Mór | Big stoney place |
| Cronealeigh | Corrán na Liath | Grey stoney place |
| Crow's Grove | Crow's Grove | Crow's Grove |
| Deerpark New | Deerpark New | Deerpark New |
| Deerpark Old | Deerpark Old | Deerpark Old |
| Glebe | An Ghléib | Glebe (church land) |
| Lackabeg | An Leaca Bheag | The small hillside |
| Milltown | Milltown | Town of the Mill |
| Muinegrogh | Muine na gCróch | Wooded thicket of the (uncertain word) |
| Raheen | Ráithín Ardach | Little fort on the height |



3 Cartographic Sources

A number of cartographic sources were consulted in relation to Kildavin and the result of this research is detailed below.

3.1 Map of the Province of Leinster by John Speede, 1610

This map shows Kildavin and its surrounds as a heavily wooded area adjacent the river Slaney. The only local site illustrated is Clonmullen castle (figure 25), which is not surprising, as this was the home of Domhnall Spainneach, a leading member of the McMurrough Kavanagh family (see Section 4.1).



Figure 24 John Speede's map of Leinster



Figure 25 Clonmullen illustrated on John Speede's map of 1610

3.2 Down survey map of 1656

The first map to show Kildavin/Barragh in any detail are the Down Survey maps of 1656⁴. The Down Survey barony map illustrates Barroe (Barragh) parish as a mountainous and heavily wooded landscape (figure 26). The more detailed parish map shows a stylised Barrough (Barragh) church as a small building with a window and doorway that is surmounted by a cross (figure 27). This map also depicts a castle at Kilbride, and what appears to be four small cabins beside it (figure 27). It should be noted that Kilbride castle is not recorded in the Archaeological Inventory of Co. Carlow.

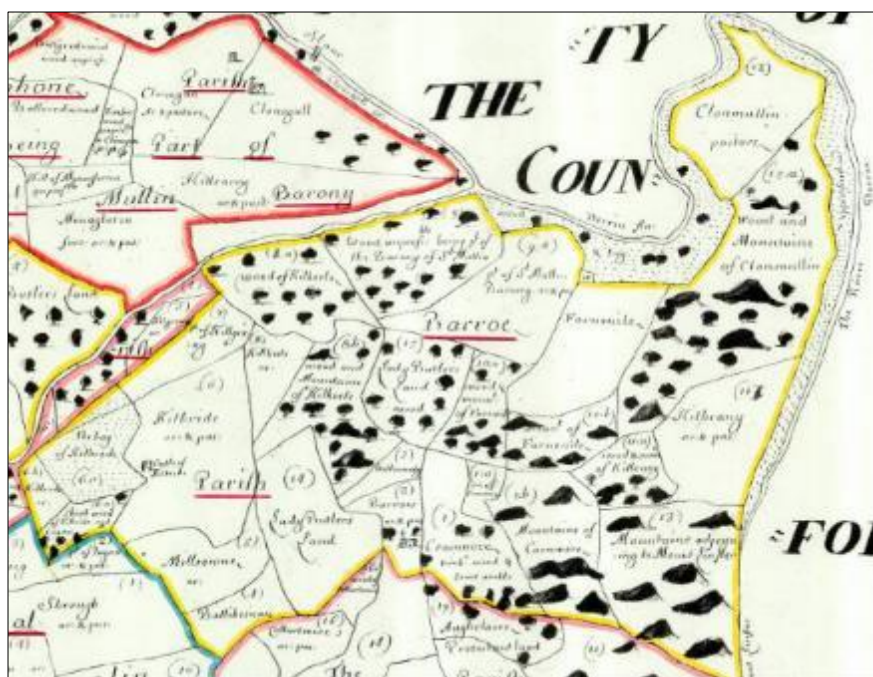


Figure 26 The Down Survey Barony map illustrating Barroe (Barragh) parish as a mountainous and heavily wooded landscape.

⁴ <http://downsurvey.tchpc.tcd.ie/>

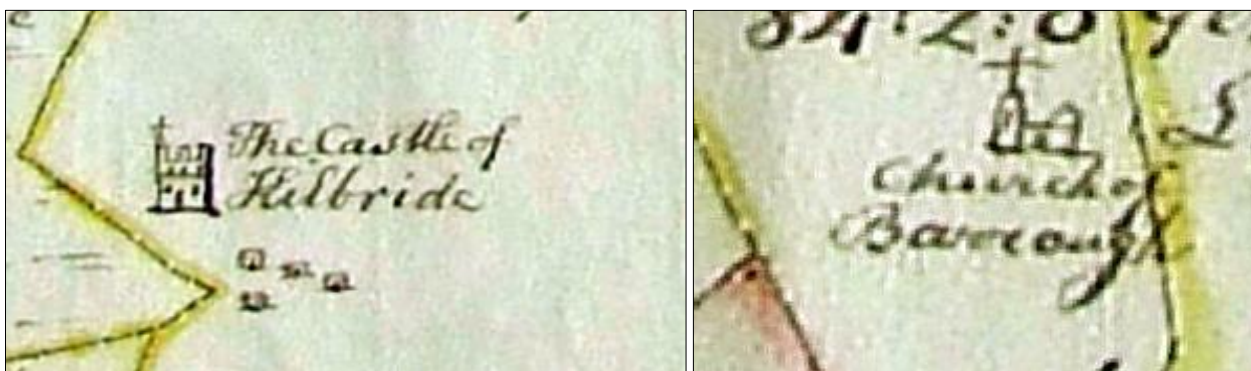


Figure 27 The Down Survey parish map showing Kilbride castle and Barragh church

3.4 A map of Carlow by William Allen, 1824

William Allen's map⁵ of Carlow from 1824 shows that Kildavin was a focal point for the local road network in the early 19th century (figure 28). It was situated on a crossroads that facilitated travel between Newtownbarry (Bunclody) and Carlow town, as well as between Clonegal and Myshall.



Figure 28 William Allen's map, 1824

3.5 First Edition Ordnance Survey map, circa 1839

The 1st edition O.S. map illustrates Kildavin village in good detail (figure 29). It shows a cluster of houses around a crossroads and the two parish churches of St. Paul's and St. Lazerian's are depicted at their present locations. A 'Corn & Carding Mill' is shown on the southern side of the village as is Kildavin House. The 1st Edition O.S. map for the wider Kildavin area depicts Barragh church as a long rectangular structure, with a graveyard to the north, while Cranavane is called 'ToberCranaman' in

⁵ <https://www.logainm.ie/en/resources/historical-maps>



Gothic script (figure 30). The latter site is located within a rectangular enclosure that contains two buildings, possibly representing a farmstead (although this is not certain).



Figure 29 Kildavin village on the 1st Edition O.S. map (archaeology.ie)



Figure 30 Barragh church and Cranavane holy well depicted on the 1st Edition O.S. map (archaeology.ie)



4. Brief Historical and Archaeological Background

4.1 Prehistoric

The earliest evidence for human habitation in Kildavin was identified during an archaeological excavation in Carrickduff townland⁶. This uncovered the remains of pits and postholes which were indicative of settlement activity. Pottery and flint artefacts were recovered from these features and these suggested that the site dated from the Late Neolithic/Early Bronze, or approximately 4,500 years ago. Further evidence for prehistoric activity in Kildavin includes the remains of at least six probable ring-ditches/barrows. These burial monuments date from the Bronze and Iron Age (2,500BC -400AD) and typically consist of a circular ditch, the upcast from which was used to create a central mound or an internal bank. Cremation was the dominant form of burial rite practiced, although inhumation was also used. The burial remains were sometimes accompanied by grave goods, such as decorated pottery urns or bronze artefacts. The deposition of grave goods being particularly popular during the Early Bronze Age (2500-1500 BC). In Kildavin upstanding barrow-type monuments survive at Knockbarragh and Cronaleigh, while sub-surface remains likely exists at Ballyshancarragh (3 sites) and Milltown.



Figure 31 Archaeologist excavating a prehistoric barrow

Further evidence for prehistoric activity can be seen at Kilbrannish North, where a standing stone formerly stood in a large pasture field. This was 'an irregularly shaped slab, circa 1.85m tall, which is was inclined at 45 degrees to the southeast'⁷. Isolated standing stones were used throughout prehistory and may have fulfilled a variety of different roles. For instance, some appear to have commemorated burials, while others may have defined territories or marked important route ways⁸.

⁶ <https://excavations.ie/report/2007/Carlow/0017057/>

⁷ SMR file

⁸ see O'Sullivan M. & Downey L. 2020, pp. 26-29



In 1933 O'Toole recorded that a '*circle of standing stones, most probably a Druid's circle*' was located '20 perches' (circa 100m) from Barragh church⁹. This monument is not recorded in the Archaeological Inventory of Co. Carlow and it is not illustrated on any of the Ordnance Survey maps for the area. However, a local account describes how some large upright stones were removed from the adjacent townland of Moneygarth in the 1950s¹⁰. It is possible that these stones correspond to O'Toole's '*Druid circle*'. If so, they may represent an unrecorded stone circle of possible prehistoric date. In Ireland stone circles appear to largely date from the Bronze Age (2500-500BC). They were used for a multiplicity of purposes, both cultural and practical, including burials and ceremonial rites, religious practices and community gatherings, as well as acting as places for exchange and trade, while possible astronomical uses have also been suggested¹¹.

4.2 Early Medieval

The arrival of Christianity to the shores of Ireland saw the start of a new phase in Irish history, the Early Medieval period (AD 400-1100). Characterised by a flourishing Gaelic culture and an expanding Christian church, this era also saw the arrival of the written word to Ireland. As a result, this is the first period from which documentary sources exist and these greatly aid our understanding of the era. The country appears to have been sub-divided into numerous smaller kingdoms or tuatha and the economy was dominated by livestock farming.

The classic settlement type of the period was the ringfort and a number of these monuments are found in Kildavin. Often referred to a 'fairy forts' in local folklore, these sites typically consist of a circular or sub-circular enclosure, defined by a bank and ditch, which originally contained a dwelling house and attendant buildings. Kildavin contains 11 circular enclosures and it is likely that the majority of these are the remains of ringforts. However, only two are still upstanding and these are found at Crowsgrove and Crann, while a third partial example exists at Carrickduff.



Figure 32 Replica ringfort at the Irish National Heritage Park in Wexford

As their names suggest ringforts are typically circular in plan, with the vast majority measuring between 25m and 35m in diameter. Their entrances normally consist of an earthen causeway across

⁹ O'Toole, E. 1933, 126

¹⁰ pers. comm. Charlie Murphy

¹¹ O'Sullivan M & Downey L. 2011, pp. 17-20



the enclosing ditch, which leads to a gap in the bank. Originally this gap would have been sealed by a wooden gate, while the banks would have been surmounted by a wooden palisade or fence. Internally the ringfort would have contained a variety of structures including a dwelling house, animals pens and other farm buildings. The houses were normally circular in plan, with walls constructed out of post and wattle panels and roofs thatched with hay, straw, or reeds. Outside the ringfort there would have been a garden for growing vegetables as well as infield area for growing crops such as oats, barley and wheat.



Figure 33 Crop mark of a double ditched ringfort at Kilbride

Ringforts are normally defined by a single bank and ditch (uni-vallate), but more elaborate double (bi-vallate) and multiple banked sites (multi-vallate) sites do occur. It has been suggested that these monuments may represent the homes of important lords and kings¹². In Kildavin, a double ditched enclosure exists at Kilbride¹³ and it is tempting to suggest that this may have been the residence of local noble.

In Kildavin probable early church sites are found at Barragh, Kilbrannish and Kildavin¹⁴. Barragh is the most impressive of these sites, as it contains the partial remains of medieval church, a graveyard and an associated holy well. The holy well, which is known as Cranavane, is located a short distance to the northeast of the church and it was traditional visited on the 3rd of May when its blessed waters were believed to cure '*soreness of the eyes and plains and debility of the limbs*'¹⁵. According to local tradition Barragh was founded by St. Finian of Myshal in the 7th century AD and the site does contain a number of features suggestive of an early foundation date. These include the presence of a ditch to the north of the church, which may form part of an ecclesiastical enclosure (figure 31). This is a characteristic feature of early monastic sites and is generally referred to as a vallum. It can be seen in the idealised layout of a monastery which is expressed in an 8th century Irish document, the *Collectio Canonum Hibernensis*. This states that '*a holy place must be surrounded byenclosures*'¹⁶. The Book of Mulling also contains a schematic monastic layout which consists of two circular enclosures with crosses at the entrances¹⁷. The proposed general layout of a monastic

¹² Stout, M. 1997 *The Irish Ringfort*, Dublin

¹³ This monument is no longer upstanding and survives as a crop-mark

¹⁴ the site at Kildavin has been completely removed by modern quarrying

¹⁵ Ordnance Survey Letter for Co. Carlow

¹⁶ Picard 2011, 60 & O'Sullivan et al 2021, 145

¹⁷ O'Sullivan et al 2021, 145



enclosure as depicted in the Book of Mulling is supported by Leo Swan's¹⁸ aerial survey studies, which indicate that ecclesiastical settlements are generally surrounded by an enclosure, similar to the one suggested for Barragh.

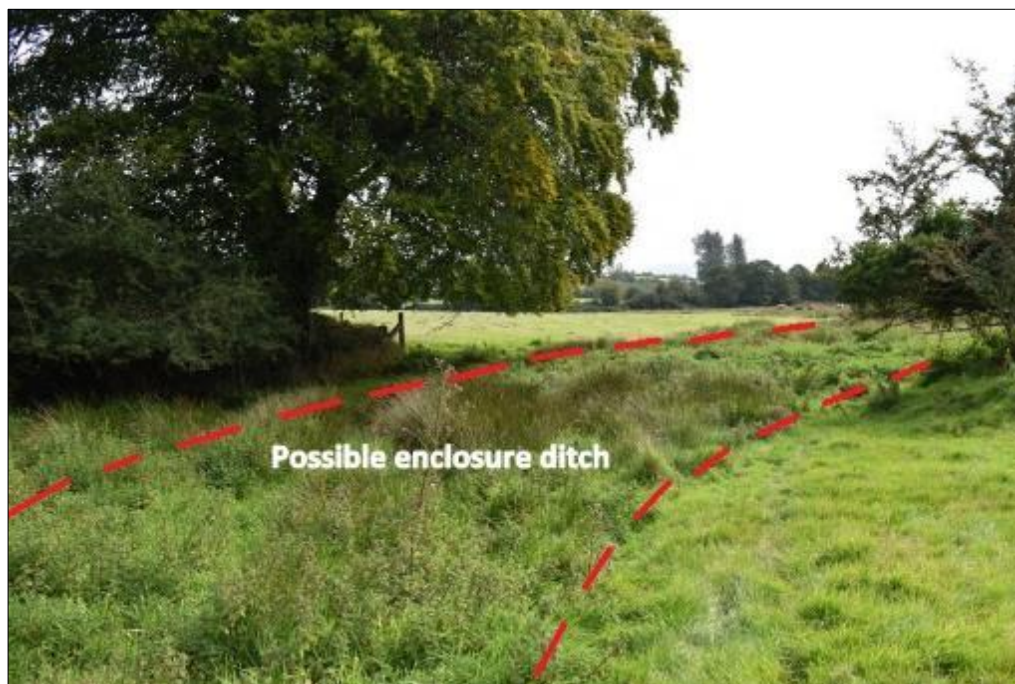


Figure 34 Possible enclosure ditch to the north of Barragh church

Early Christian churches erected between the fifth and ninth centuries were primarily built of timber, post and wattle and clay¹⁹. No wooden churches survive from this period but about twenty have been revealed during archaeological excavations²⁰. Wooden churches were gradually replaced by stone and mortar buildings from the 10th century onwards. Initially, these were small, single-celled structures, but the arrival of Romanesque architecture in the early 12th century, saw more complex buildings being erected, with the division of the church into a nave and chancel.

Although now robbed out, Barragh church originally contained a narrow, round-headed window of Romanesque type²¹. This suggests that the upstanding building may date from the 12th century. Romanesque churches tend to occur at the sites of early medieval Irish monasteries and their construction appears to be linked with a major reform of the Irish church in the first half of the 12th century²². Whatever the exact foundation date for Barragh church, it was certainly upstanding in the early 13th century, when the building and all its tithes were granted to St. Thomas' Abbey Dublin by Gilbert de Long²³.

¹⁸ Swan L. 1985, 77

¹⁹ Sullivan 2017, 18

²⁰ ibid

²¹ SMR file

²² O'Sullivan & Downey 2020, 41

²³ Gilbert J. T. 1889, 106



4.3 Late Medieval Period

The arrival of the Anglo-Normans in the late 12th century heralded a new period in Irish history and saw a change in the social structure for most of the country. However, in Kildavin Anglo-Norman rule was fleeting. Instead, the area became a bastion of Gaelic resistance that was closely associated with the McMurrough Kavanaghs. This can most clearly be seen in the late 14th century when the King of England, Richard II arrived in Ireland at the head of a large army, numbering nearly 10,000 men²⁴. His goal was to pacify the rebellious Irish, or specifically Art Mac Murrough Kavanagh, king of Leinster. Richard landed in Waterford on the 2nd of October 1394 where he gathered his forces before heading for Art's stronghold in Carlow. Marching firstly up through Kilkenny, his army entered Carlow from the west, probably at Leighlinbridge²⁵. It then advanced towards Kildavin.



Figure 35 A medieval depiction Art MacMurrough riding out to meet the English army in 1394²⁶

On the 27th of October Richard's men attacked Art MacMurrough's base in the 'wood of Laveroc' and nearly captured 'Mac Murrough and his wife in their beds. But they, being told of the affray, escaped with great difficulty.'²⁷ Subsequent research has demonstrated that the Laveroc mentioned in this text was probably situated in the vicinity of Kildavin²⁸ and Raheen townland has been suggested as one possible location²⁹. Faced with an enormous English army on his doorstep, MacMurrough was forced to concede and on the 28th of October 1394 he '*came humbly to obey....and to surrender and submit*'³⁰. However, Art's loyalty was fleeting, and once Richard II returned home, he renewed his attacks on the English colony.

²⁴ See Lydon, F. 2008, pp. 216-231.

²⁵ Kinirons, S. 2017, 122

²⁶ From Jean Creton's *Histoire du roy d'Angleterre Richard II*

²⁷ Kinirons, S. 2017, 123

²⁸ *ibid*, 123

²⁹ Mac Samhain C. 2016

³⁰ *ibid*, 125



Indeed, Kildavin and its surrounds were to remain beyond English control for the remainder of the medieval period. By the 16th century a sept of the Kavanagh clan, known as Sliocht Art Bhuí³¹ had come to prominence in the locality. They were based at Clonmullen castle and their most prominent leader was Domhnall Spainneach (Donal the Spainard). Domhnall had gained his name after spending four years in Spain, with a Tudor adventurer turned Kavanagh ally, called Thomas Stuckley³². On returning to Ireland, he became the bane of the English establishment. With a core group of about 200 men, he patrolled the countryside making life intolerable for the settlers and the garrisons sent to protect them³³. At the start of the Nine Years's War in 1593, Domhnall sided with Hugh O'Neill, Earl of Tyrone in his fight against English rule in Ireland. Domhnall's men operated in Carlow and Wexford, making both counties largely ungovernable. In 1597 he joined with O'Moores and the O'Byrnes to waste Meath, while a little later he laid waste to the country from Kilkenny to Enniscorthy, where he wiped out the garrison³⁴. The fear instilled by these attacks can be seen in Sir Henry Wallop's description of Domhnall, *'He takes our cattle, mows our meadows, spoils our houses, kills our people, and in all ways disquiets the poor county of Wexford'*.³⁵

The war eventually turned against the Irish and following Hugh O'Neill's defeat at Battle of Kinsale, Domhnall submitted to crown. He managed to retain much of his land and on his death in 1631 his son, Morgan Kavanagh, inherited circa 13,000 acres. Like his father, Morgan ruled from Clonmullen castle, which was located on the border between Carlow and Wexford. In 1635 Sir William Brereton described the castle as *'an old, high, narrow, and inconvenient building' situated 'in the most solitary, melancholy, place, woods on two sides and plains on the other'*.³⁶ Morgan's tenure at Clonmullen was not to be a peaceful one, however, and he was soon drawn into the Confederate wars which erupted in 1641. He became an officer in the Confederate army and was killed leading his men at the Battle of Ballinvegga in March 1643. His son Domhnall Óg continued to fight but he was eventually forced to submit after the Cromwellian conquest. He lost his lands and emigrated to Spain, while his brother Charles lived on at Carrickduff³⁷, but now as a tenant of the new Cromwellian landlord, Arthur Annesley. The MacMurrough Kavanagh rule of Kildavin had finally come to an end.

³¹ McHugh 2003, 4

³² Dalton, B. 1995, 5

³³ *ibid*, p.5

³⁴ *ibid*, p. 5

³⁵ McHugh, 2003, 3

³⁶ *ibid*, 22

³⁷ Dalton, 1995, 6



5. Archaeological Excavations in Kildavin

The Archaeological Excavations Bulletin at www.excavations.ie was checked with reference to Kildavin. The Excavations Bulletin is a database that summaries all the known licensed archaeological excavations in Ireland. However, it should be noted that it is a self-reporting database and gaps in information sometimes occur. This review found that least 3 archaeological investigations had taken place in and around Kildavin (figure 36). These works revealed the presence of pits and postholes, which most likely representing a Late Neolithic/Early Bronze Age settlement at Carrickduff, Kildavin, while a stone-lined pit, of possible medieval date, was identified at Clonogan, Clonegal. The results of these excavations are detailed below.

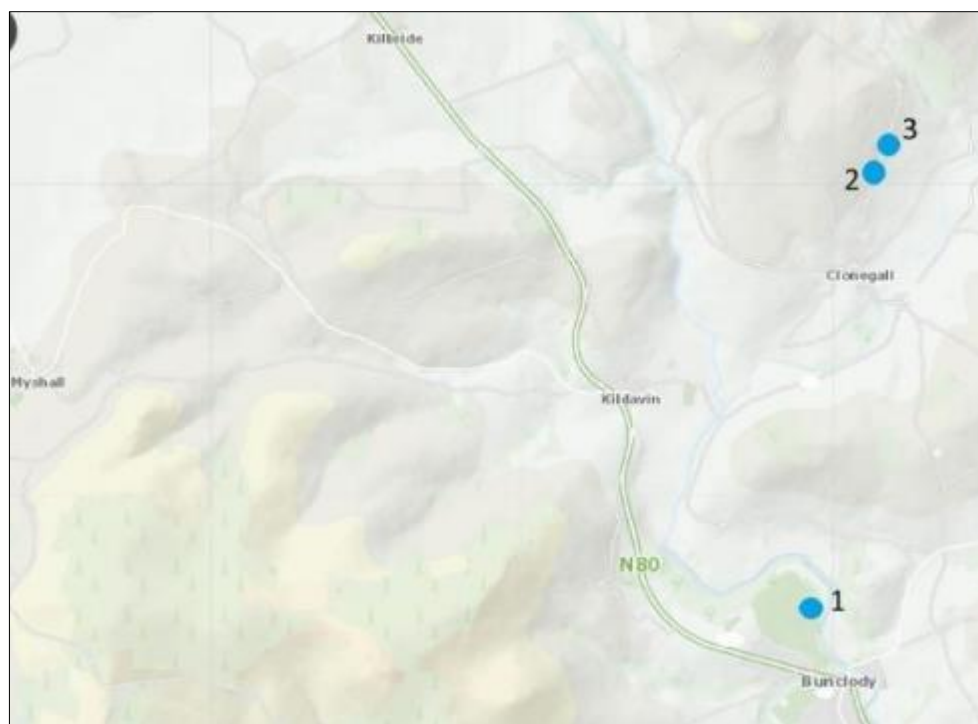


Figure 36 Archaeological excavations in the vicinity of Kildavin (heritagemaps.ie)

1. **Location:** Carrickduff, Kildavin

Licence No. 06E0499

Archaeologist: Catherine McLoughlin

Description: Testing at this site was undertaken in response to planning conditions. A number of pits and post-holes were identified, some of which contained struck flint and pottery. The pottery appeared to date to the Neolithic period. These features were preserved *in situ*. Monitoring in 2007 revealed the presence of further prehistoric pits and post-holes. These were subsequently excavated and a Late Neolithic/Early Bronze Age date for these features is likely, based on the pottery and flint artefacts found in association with them.



2. Location: Clonogan, Clonegal

Licence No. 15E0254

Archaeologist: Catherine McLoughlin

Description: Testing was undertaken at a development site at Clonogan, Co. Carlow. 11 trenches were excavated, and a series of furrows and a post-medieval field boundary were noted. One trench contained a very large stone-lined circular pit which may be medieval in date. The development site is located close to Clonogan Castle and enclosure (CW018-013). The pit was not impacted upon by the development.

3. Location: Clonogan, Clonegal

Licence No. 02E1010

Archaeologist: Cólín Ó Drisceoil

Description: Monitoring took place of the groundworks for a residential development. In the adjacent field to the south was the site of Clonogan Castle, a tower-house (SMR 18:13(01)). A rectangular area, 24.5m by 22.1m, with a driveway, 25m by 4m, was stripped of topsoil using a mechanical digger with a 3ft (0.9m) toothed bucket. The topsoil varied from 0.2m to 0.4m deep and lay above grey/yellow boulder clay. No archaeological materials were found during monitoring.



6. Recorded Archaeological Monuments in Kildavin/Barragh.

Recorded monuments are sites, structures and features of archaeological significance which are protected by National Monuments legislation (1930-2014). Each county contains a list of these sites, and this is known as The Record of Monuments and Places, or RMP. The Recorded of Monuments and Places (RMP)³⁸ for County Carlow was consulted and this revealed that Kildavin (specifically the civil parish of Barragh) contains at least 30 archaeological monuments. Of these 11 are still upstanding, while the remainder only survive as sub-surface remains or are no longer extant. Site location maps (Section 6.1) and a brief synopsis of each monument (Section 6.2) follows. This is based primarily on the digital version of the Record of Monument and Places (archaeology.ie³⁹), with additional details being provided by the authors' own historical research and field notes.

| Site Type | Number identified | Possible date range | Townlands |
|----------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|--|
| Ringforts/enclosures | 11 | Early medieval | Carrickduff (x2), Craan (x2), Crowsgrove (x2), Deerpark Old, Kilbrannish South, Kilbride (x2) & Raheen |
| Barrows/ring ditches | 6 | Prehistoric | Knockbarragh, Cronaleigh, Ballyshancarragh (x3) & Milltown |
| Churches/graveyards | 5 | Early medieval/medieval | Barragh, Kilbrannish South (x2), Kildavin & Milltown |
| Holy Wells | 4 | Early medieval/medieval | Ballinvally, Kilbrannish South, Kildavin & Milltown |
| Castles | 2 | Late medieval | Carrickduff & Clonmullen |
| Standing Stone | 1 | Prehistoric | Kilbrannish North |

Table 2. Summary of RMP sites in Kildavin area

³⁸ <https://maps.archaeology.ie/HistoricEnvironment/>

³⁹ <https://maps.archaeology.ie/HistoricEnvironment/>



6.1 RMP locations maps

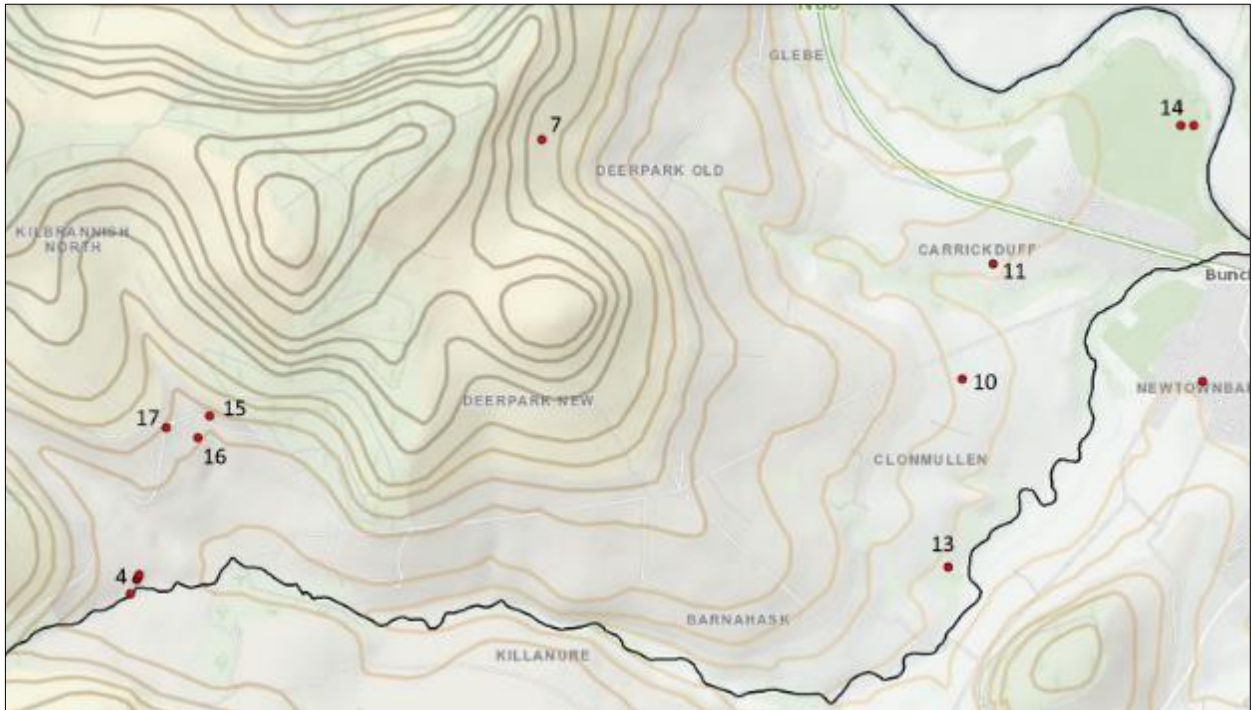


Figure 37 Location of RMPs in the southern part of study area (archaeology.ie)

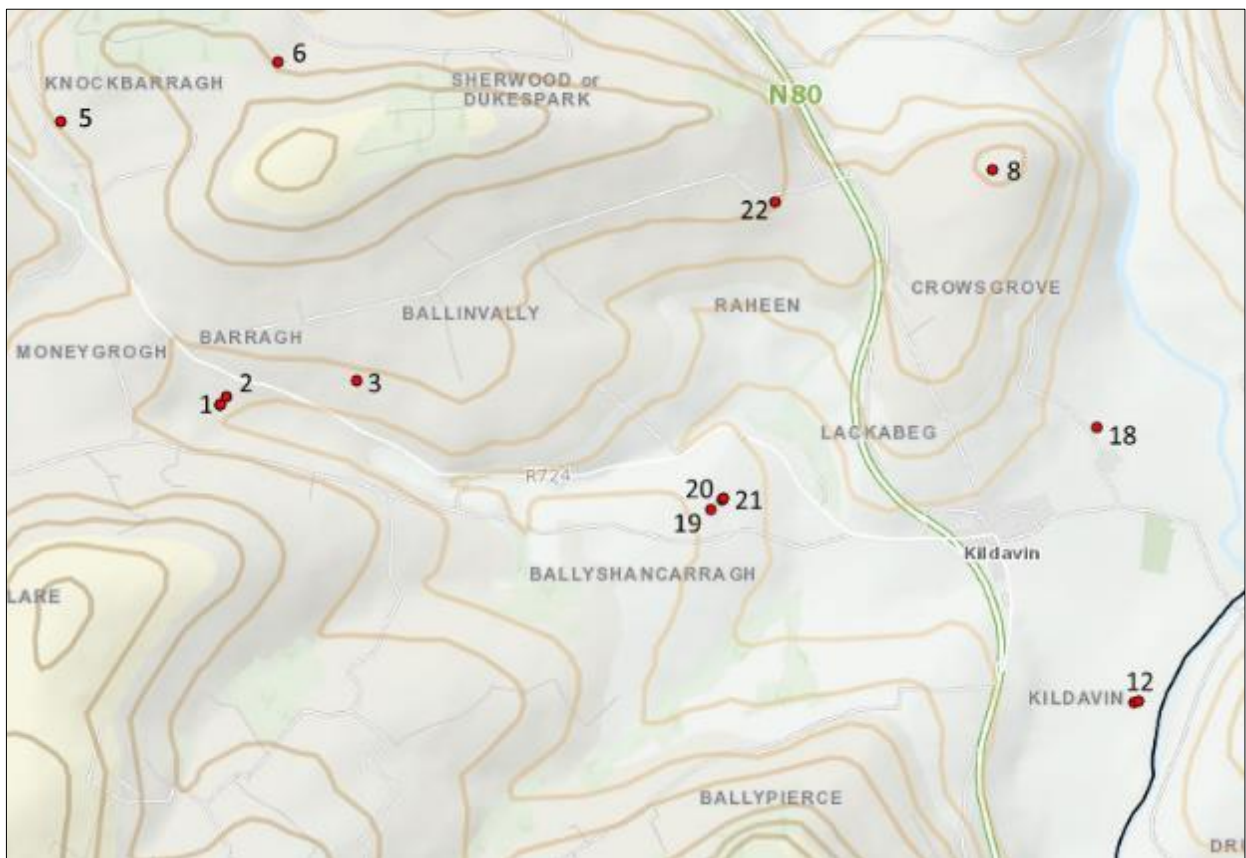


Figure 38 Location of RMPs in the central part of the study area (archaeology.ie)

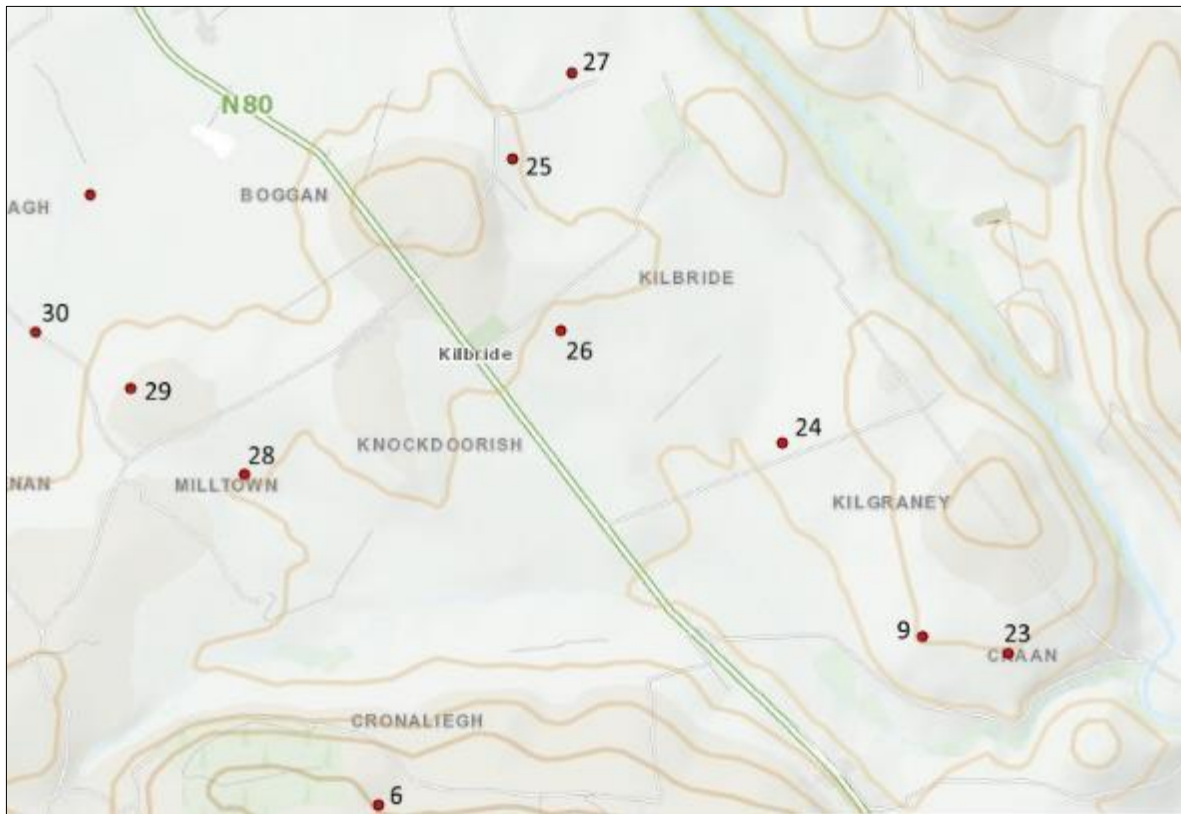


Figure 39 Location of RMPs in the northern part of the study area (archaeology.ie)



6.2 Brief synopsis of each RMP

What follows is a brief synopsis of each RMP found in Kildavin. This is based primarily on the digital version of the Record of Monument and Places (archaeology.ie⁴⁰), with additional details being provided by the authors' own historical research and field notes.

| | | | | |
|----|--------------|---------------|------------------|-------------|
| 1. | Name: | Church | Townland: | Barragh |
| | ITM: | 685702 660525 | RMP No: | CW017-42001 |

Site description: The parish church of Barragh is the oldest upstanding building in Kildavin and it represents a significant heritage asset. Local tradition states that it was founded by St. Finian of Myshal in the 7th century AD⁴¹. It was certainly upstanding in the early 13th century when the church and all its tithes were granted to St. Thomas' Abbey Dublin by Gilbert de Long⁴².

The building is a long, narrow structure that originally measured circa 25m in length by 4.8m in width. It is constructed out of roughly coursed field stones, bonded with lime mortar. The corners of the building are defined by regular granite quoins. Today the upstanding church consists of a relatively well-preserved western end (height of walls circa 5m) and poorly preserved southern wall. The east gable is no longer extant, and the north wall largely survives as grass covered foundations. There are two large holes in the southern wall which have been the extensively robbed out. The most western of these holes originally held a doorway, while the second contained a window. When the archaeological survey of Co. Carlow was completed in the 1980s this window was still intact, but it has since been removed. It consisted of narrow, round-headed, Romanesque-style ope of probable 12th century date. The western gable of the church contains a number of putlog holes. These small, rectangular holes were used to support scaffolding poles during the construction of the church and they represent important architectural features.

The church structure is currently in poor condition and requires conservation work. A large crack was evident in the northwest corner of the building and if not rectified, could lead to masonry collapse. There is also extensive ivy growth along the western and southern walls of the building. The roots of these plants are quite substantial and are weakening the structure of the church by loosening masonry and eroding mortar joints. This ivy should only be removed as part of planned programme of conservation works. Weathering of mortar was also noted throughout the church as were masonry voids. Outside the southern wall of the church is the base of a granite font (CW017-42003), while a rotary quern stone lies in the grass to the north of the building. Evidence of a possible enclosing ditch is also visible to the north of the church. This takes the form of a linear area of wet, boggy ground that appears to demark a boundary line associated with the church.

According to tradition, the church was destroyed by Cromwell and a rich folklore exists around the building's demise. These include an account from the School's Folklore Collection which states, '*When the priest saw them (the yeomen) he rushed from the church taking the gold sanctuary gate and the chalice with him and he threw them in a bog hole about a hundred yards away from*

⁴⁰ <https://maps.archaeology.ie/HistoricEnvironment/>

⁴¹ White W.D. 1994, 10

⁴² Gilbert J. T. 1889 *Register of the Abbey of St. Thomas, Dublin*, p. 106



*the church. He had only just thrown them away when the soldiers came upon him and killed him. They then went back and burned the church. It is the belief of the people in this district that the gate and chalice are still in the bog.*⁴³



Figure 40 A heavily vegetated Barragh church, looking northwest.



Figure 41 Barragh church, viewed from the north.

⁴³ The Schools' Collection, Volume 0911, Page 138



Figure 42 Barragh church, looking southeast



Figure 43 Western gable of Barragh church



Figure 44 Interior of Barragh church, looking west



Figure 45 Robbed out doorway and window in southern church wall



Figure 46 Substantial crack in northern wall and masonry void in southern wall



Figure 47 Base of baptismal font and a rotary quern stone

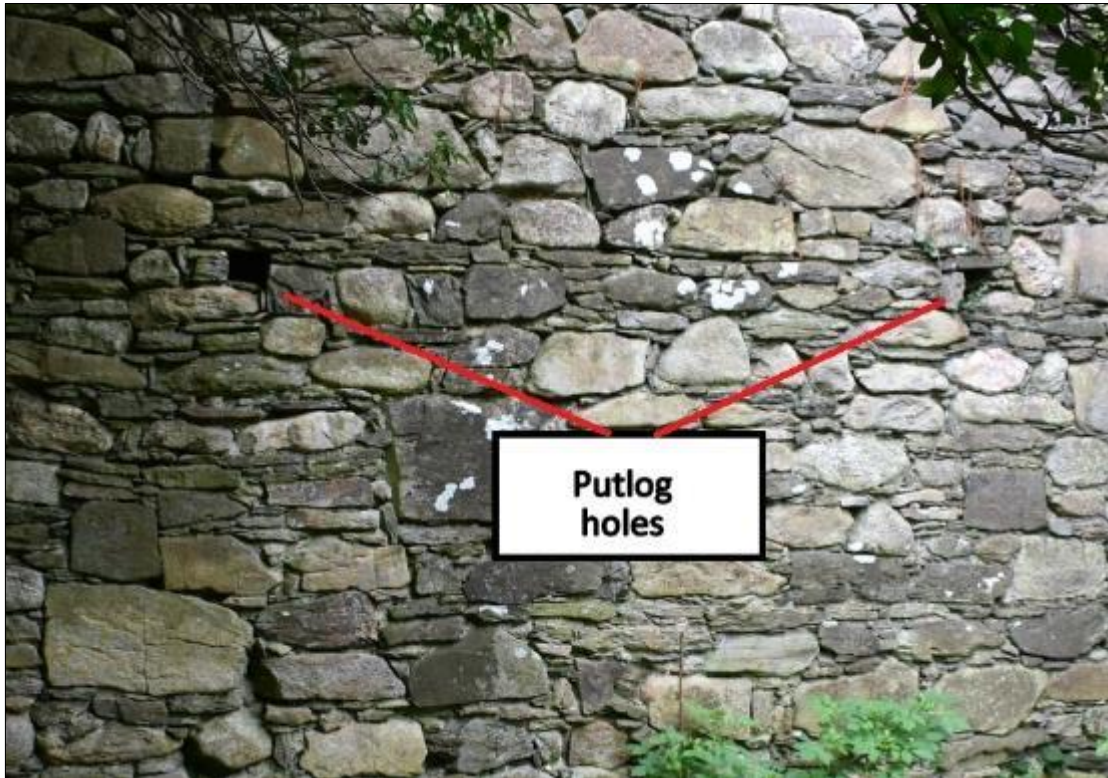


Figure 48 Putlog holes in western gable

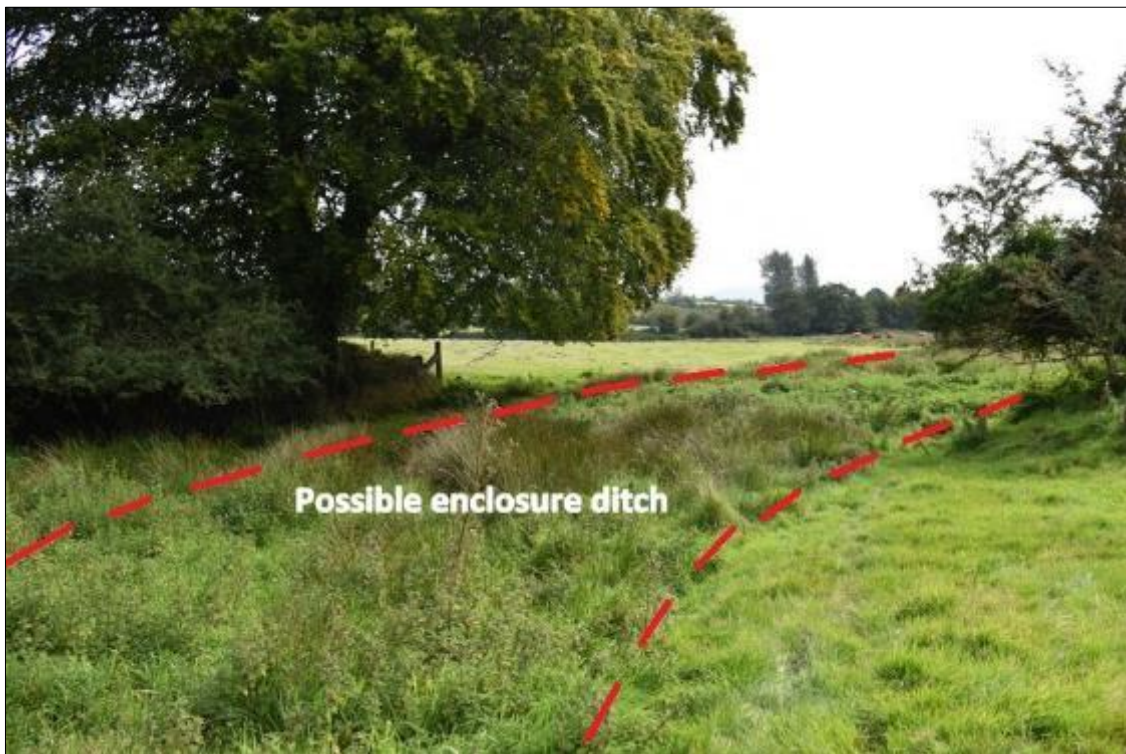


Figure 49 Outline of possible enclosure on northern side of the church



| | | | | |
|----|-------------------|---------------|------------------|-------------|
| 2. | Site type: | Graveyard | Townland: | Barragh |
| | ITM: | 685733 660581 | RMP No. | CW017-42002 |

Site description: This irregular shaped graveyard is located circa 20m to the north of Barragh church (CW017-042001). It is entered through a traditional wrought iron gate that hangs on granite piers. The graveyard interior is very overgrown, and it was difficult to discern any headstones. According to local tradition there are at least three headstones at the very southern end of the graveyard, but these were not visible when the site was inspected. One of these is dedicated to Margaret Neall, nee Dempsey, who died in February 1727⁴⁴. In addition, two priests, Fr. Brian Cuiric and Fr. Thomas Dempsey are reputedly buried at the site in unmarked graves⁴⁵. A number of boulders were noted near the centre of the graveyard and these may represent burial markers of people who were unable to afford headstones. The graveyard boundary is defined by an earthen bank that contains some very large beech trees. These trees are enormous and may be several hundred years old. According to the Irish Church Act of 1869 Barragh was vested by the Church Temporalities Commissioners to Enniscorthy Poor Law Union⁴⁶. Ownership should subsequently have passed on to Carlow County Council.



Figure 50 Barragh graveyard and church, looking southeast

⁴⁴ White 1994, 10

⁴⁵ *ibid*

⁴⁶ Monk, J. A. L. 1879, 37



Figure 51 Wrought iron gate and very large beech tree at Barragh graveyard



Figure 4 Dense overgrowth inside graveyard



Figure 52 Possible boulder grave markers



| | | | | |
|----|-------------------|---------------------|------------------|-------------|
| 3. | Site type: | Cranavane Holy Well | Townland: | Ballinvally |
| | ITM: | 686253 660624 | RMP No.: | CW017-43 |

Site description: This site is located up a short laneway which gives access to small enclosure containing two drystone holy wells, which are approximately 20m apart. There is also an unusual 'coffin-shaped' pit, that contains water run-off from one of the holy wells. According to tradition coffins were dipped into this pit before burial in the nearby Barragh graveyard. The site also contains a number of drystone walls and these appear to be related to a building shown on the 1st Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1839 (see Section 3). There is also a beehive-shaped stone structure, but this is of modern date. Locally the holy well is associated with St. Finian of Myshal, and a stone embedded in the ground contains an impression which is meant to represent the saint's footprint. The well was traditionally visited on May the 3rd⁴⁷ and this could be quite a raucous occasion leading to the patron being cancelled in 1798⁴⁸ and again in 1870 when the parish priest Father Patrick Dunne finally banned pilgrimage to the well⁴⁹.



Figure 53 Cranavane holy well and access laneway

Like many holy wells the blessed waters at Cranavane were believed to cure ailments. According to John O'Donovan writing in 1839 '*About a quarter of a mile north of the old ruins of Barrach Church is a blessed (holy) well called Cronavane Well, at which a Patron was formerly held, but discontinued since the year '98. This well is still frequented by those labouring under soreness of the eyes and plains and debility of the limbs*'⁵⁰. Another account describes how in the late 19th century it was the custom to bring delicate children to Cranavane in May and bath them in a granite trough outside the entrance of the well⁵¹. This belief in the curative powers of the holy water continued into the 1930s when it was stated '*People visit this well every year. It is usual to go three days in May. Long ago there were nine stones around the well, but they are now covered up. Old people used say the rosary at each stone. People usually take some of the water to drink. It was blessed to cure sight*'.⁵²

Cranavane holy well is a nicely maintained site that is clearly very important to the local community. It is well signposted and contains two detailed information panels. It is a heritage asset not just for Kildavin, but also the wider county of Carlow.

⁴⁷ O'Toole 1933, 125

⁴⁸ O'Donovan J. 1839, Ordnance Survey Letters for Co. Carlow

⁴⁹ Via onsite Information Board

⁵⁰ O'Donovan J. 1839, Ordnance Survey Letters for Co. Carlow

⁵¹ O'Toole 1933, 125

⁵² The Schools' Collection, Volume 0911, Page 268



Figure 54 The southern holy well and the unusual coffin-shaped pit



Figure 55 The northern holy well



Figure 56 beehive-shaped structure and 1916 commemorative stone



Figure 57 Stone containing saint's 'footprint' and drystone walling



Figure 58 Information panels



4. **Site type:** Burial ground and holy well **Townland:** Kilbrannish South
ITM: 685467 655259 **RMP Nos.** CW020-0200 & CW020-019

Site description: This site is illustrated on the 1st Edition Ordnance survey map (1839) as a circular enclosure which is described as a 'Relic graveyard'⁵³. St. Bridget's holy well is depicted a short distance to the southwest. Today the site consists of sub-rectangular area of grass that has recently been fenced off. Two grave markers were noted at the site during the Archaeological Survey of Co. Carlow, a cross-shaped stone and a rectangular slab. St Bridget's holy well (CW020-019) is a natural spring, which flows into the adjacent Clody river. It is no longer venerated but according to the School's Folklore Collection the well was still a place of pilgrimage in the 1930s when, '*people come to visit it on the 15th of August each year (and) special prayers are said*'.⁵⁴

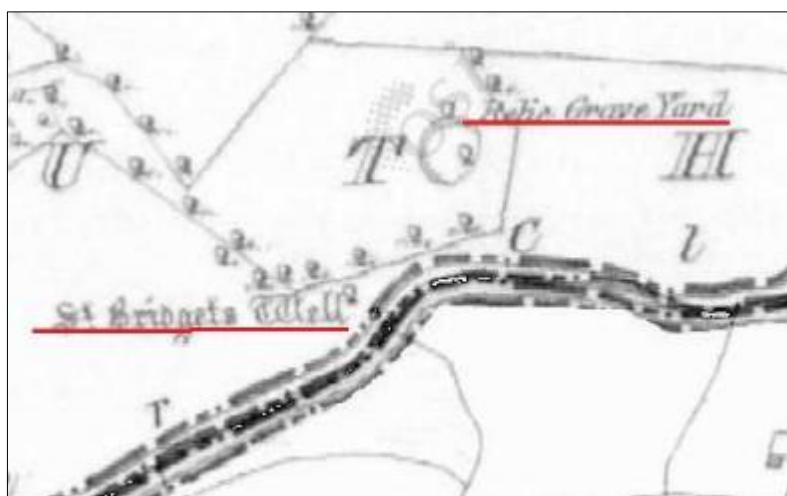


Figure 5 Site illustrated on the 1st Edition O.S. mapping (archaeology.ie)



Figure 59 the graveyard today (Google Earth 2023)

⁵³ In this instance 'Relic' is probably an anglicisation of the Irish word for a graveyard 'Rellig'

⁵⁴ The Schools' Collection, Volume 0911, Page 018



5. **Site type:** Prehistoric mound barrow **Townland:** Knockbarragh
ITM: 685049 661706 **RMP No.:** CW017-033

Site description: The site is located in a large pasture field and it consists of an approximately circular mound on sloping ground. There are a number of large boulders on the mound and these may represent field clearance. A mound barrow is a type of funerary monument that consist of a circular or oval mound of earth that covers burial remains. They typically date from the Bronze Age or Iron Age (2400 BC-400AD).



Figure 60 Prehistoric mound barrow at Knockbarragh

6. **Site Type:** Prehistoric ring-cairn **Townland:** Cronaleigh
ITM: 685945 661945 **RMP No.** CW017-062

Site description: This monument is located on the lower slope of a hill which rises to the southwest. It consists of roughly circular area (external diameter circa 30m) enclosed by a bank composed of small stones. The bank is retained by kerbing stones internally, these being best preserved in the northeast quadrant. There is also a suggestion of external kerbing, with several possible kerbstones protruding from the bank slip. Though built on a hillslope the interior is relatively level, though slightly hummocky. The bank is grass covered and falls sharply to the interior, particularly where the slope is highest. There has been a lot of field clearance stones dumped on the bank, with some spillage into the interior. The monument is known locally as the Raheen. Ring-cairns are part of the Early Bronze Age burial tradition. They consist of a low, wide ring or bank of stones surrounding an open, roughly circular area which is, or was initially, free of cairn material. Only one other ring-cairn



(CW019-069) has been identified in Co. Carlow. It is 11.7km to the south-west of Cronaleigh, on the western slopes of the Blackstairs Mountains, in the townland of Knocksquire⁵⁵.



Figure 61 Cronaleigh ring cairn (photo: National Monuments Service)



Figure 62 Aerial view of the ring cairn (Google Earth)

⁵⁵ <https://www.archaeology.ie/monument-of-the-month/archive/cronaleigh>



7. **Site Type:** Enclosure **Townland:** Deerpark Old
ITM: 687559 657545 **RMP No.:** CW020-031

Site description: This enclosure is located on an east-facing slope immediately north of John's Hill. It consists of an oval-shaped enclosure (dimensions circa. 27m NE-SW by c. 20m NW-SE) that is located in dense vegetation and was first identified by Séamus Ó Murchú using Bing satellite imagery. The site is not illustrated on the 1st Edition Ordnance Survey map (1839) and it may represent an early medieval enclosure. However, it should be noted that it is located at quite an elevation, in rough ground. This area was known locally as the 'gardens'⁵⁶ and may have been related to post-medieval transhumance/booleying farming. It's possible that the enclosure was related to this activity.



Figure 63 Aerial image of the enclosure at Old Deerpark

8. **Site type:** Enclosure/ringfort **Townland:** Crowsgrove
ITM: 688885 661513 **RMP No.:** CW018-012

Site description: This probable early medieval ringfort consists of a sub-circular area enclosed by an earthen bank. It measures circa 28m in diameter and the interior is covered in trees and bushes. This monument is known locally as Redmond's Rath. Ringforts typically date from between the 7th and 10th centuries AD and were most likely the homes of wealthy farmers and the nobility.

⁵⁶ pers. comm. Jim FitzHarris



Figure 64 Redmond's Rath, Crowsgrove (archaeology.ie)

9. **Site type:** Ringfort/Enclosure **Townland:** Craan
ITM: 688255 662670 **RMP No.:** CW018-007

Site description: This ringfort is located in the corner of a pasture field. It consists of a circular area, approximately 26m in diameter, that is enclosed by a much-degraded stone and earth bank. Ringforts typically date from between the 7th and 10th centuries AD and were most likely the homes of wealthy farmers and the nobility.



Figure 65 Ringfort at Craan (archaeology.ie)



10. **Site Type:** Enclosure /ringfort **Townland:** Carrickduff
ITM: 689741 656306 **RMP No.** CW021-004

Site description: A very distinct curve can be seen in the townland boundary between Carrickduff and Clonmullen. This probably marks the southern side of what was originally a circular monument (diameter c. 50m). This feature may represent the partial remains of an early medieval ringfort.

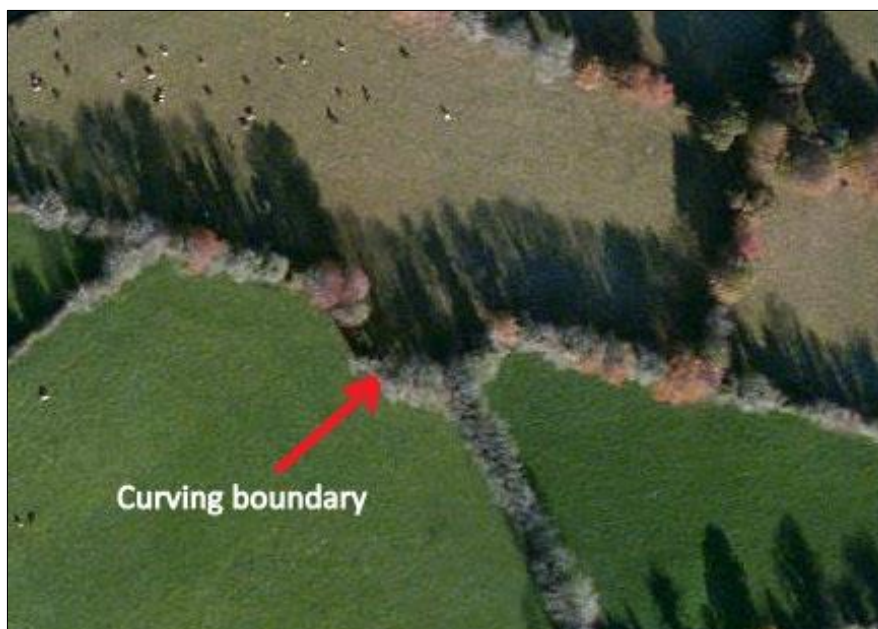


Figure 66 Partial remains of an enclosure at Carrickduff (archaeology.ie)

11. **Site Type:** Fortified House **Townland:** Carrickduff
ITM: 689895 656898 **RMP No.** CW021-002

Site description: Tower formerly attached to another building at north as shown by doorways in north wall at all three levels. Building may have included medieval or seventeenth-century structure. Many large Georgian-style windows reaching to floor with fireplaces in northwest corners and extensive use of red brick. Gables on north and south walls. Survives as an ivy clad ruin.

Sites that are no longer upstanding

The following monuments appear to be no longer upstanding. However, it should be noted that sub-surface archaeological remains may still survive at these sites.



12. Site Type: Church and graveyard (not upstanding) **Townland:** Kildavin

ITM: 689481 659325

RMP Nos. CW018-017001 & CW018-017002

Site description: This early church site was completely removed by 20th century quarrying and nothing now survives. According to an ITA⁵⁷ Survey (1945), this site was founded by St. Abbán in early 6th century AD. However, other sources⁵⁸ suggest it was associated with 'St. Davan' and considering the church's name, this seems more likely. Indeed, it's possible that the St. Davan mentioned here is St. Damán, a brother of St. Abbán, who was also associated with Kildavin church in Co. Wexford. The 1st Edition O.S. map (1839) shows the remains of structure at the site, which John O'Donovan describes as '*foundations... measuring thirty-nine feet in length and twenty feet in breath. There is a small and little-frequented graveyard attached to the old site*'⁵⁹ Leask recorded traces of granite-built church, with one piece of chamfered door jamb lying loose⁶⁰. By the 2nd Edition O.S map (1909) the graveyard is roughly D-shaped and the church is no longer visible, being depicted by a cross. The site is described at St. David's Church on this map. There was also an associated holy well, but this is not marked on any maps. It was located near the Clonegal road and according to the School's Folklore Collections '*the waters of the Slaney cover it in the Winter, but in the summer it can be seen. It was blessed by St. Davan*'.⁶¹



Figure 67 The site of Kildavin church on the 2nd Edition O.S. map and a modern aerial view (archaeology.ie)

13. Site Type: Castle/tower house

Townland: Clonmullen

ITM: 689663 655338

RMP No. CW021-003

Site description: Indicated as 'Site of Clonmullen Castle' on the 1st edition Ordnance Survey map (1839). This was home to the Kavanagh family. In 1635 it was described thus '*This castle and seat of Sir Morgan Kavanagh is an old, high, narrow, and inconvenient building*' is situated '*in the most*

⁵⁷ Irish Tourist Association

⁵⁸ The Schools' Collection, Volume 0911, Page 268

⁵⁹ O'Donovan, J. 1839, 119

⁶⁰ 1941, OPW file

⁶¹ *ibid*



solitary, melancholy, place, woods on two sides and plains on the other'.⁶² The castle had fallen by the 19th century and there is no visible trace of the monument at ground level.

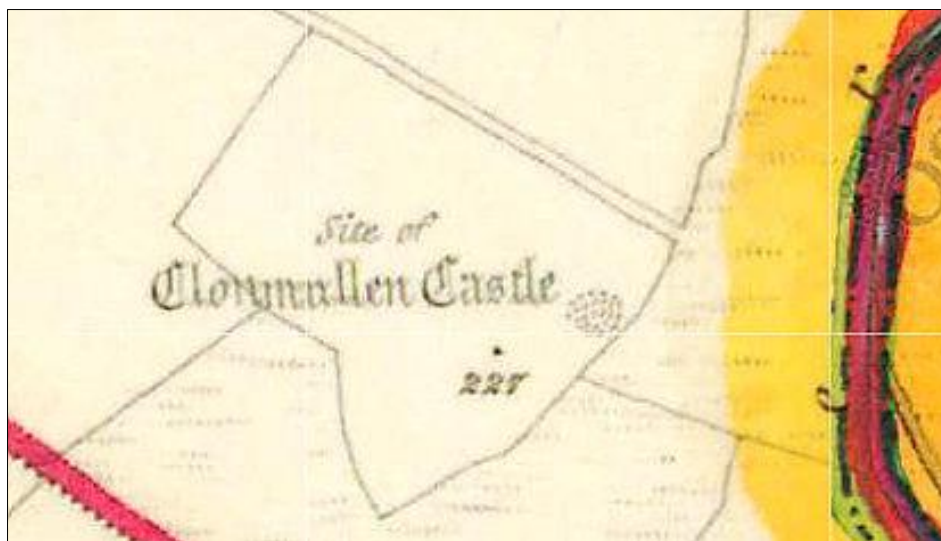


Figure 68 Site of Clonmullen castle illustrated on the 1st Edition O.S. mapping (archaeology.ie)

14. **Site type:** Enclosure (no longer standing) **Townland:** Carrickduff
ITM: 690872 657621 **RMP No.** CW021-001

Site description: This monument is shown as an oval embanked enclosure on the 1st Edition O. S map (1839) where it is described as '*Round O (?) Rath*' in Gothic script. This feature, which is no longer upstanding, may represent an early medieval ringfort. Presently the site consists of a large quarry hole that has been planted to make an ornamental feature. A number of prehistoric pits and postholes were exposed immediately to the east during the development work on the golf-course in 2006 and 2007 (Excavation Licence number 06E0499).

⁶² McHugh 2003, 22



Figure 69 Enclosure at Carrickduff (archaeology.ie)

- 15 **Site type:** Standing stone (no longer upstanding) **Townland:** Kilbrannish North
ITM: 685842 656114 **RMP No.** CW020-022

Site description: Described in the Archaeological Survey of Co. Carlow as an irregularly shaped slab, circa 1.85m tall, which is inclined at 45 degrees to the southeast. The stone, which is located in a field of improved pasture, appears to be no longer upstanding.

16. **Site type:** Burial ground (no longer upstanding) **Townland:** Kilbrannish South
ITM: 685781 655998 **RMP No.** CW020-009

Site description: Marked on 1st Edition O. S. map as 'Site of Kilbrannish Grave Yard'. According to the Archaeological Survey of Co. Carlow the site presented as an unenclosed rectangular area (c. 14.5m N-S; c. 16m E-W), that was slightly higher than surrounding field level.

17. **Site type:** Enclosure (no longer upstanding) **Townland:** Kilbrannish South
ITM: 685608 656054 **RMP No.** CW020-008

Site description: A large, circular enclosure that was formerly located in Kilbrannish South townland. It is shown on the 1st (1839) and 2nd (1909) Edition O.S. maps as a wooded area that was bisected by a crossroads. The southwest section of this enclosure survived up until recently, but unfortunately it has now been removed. At circa 130m in diameter, this monument is too large to have been a ringfort and its original function remains uncertain. It is described as 'The Scratoes' on the 2nd Edition O.S. map (c. 1909).

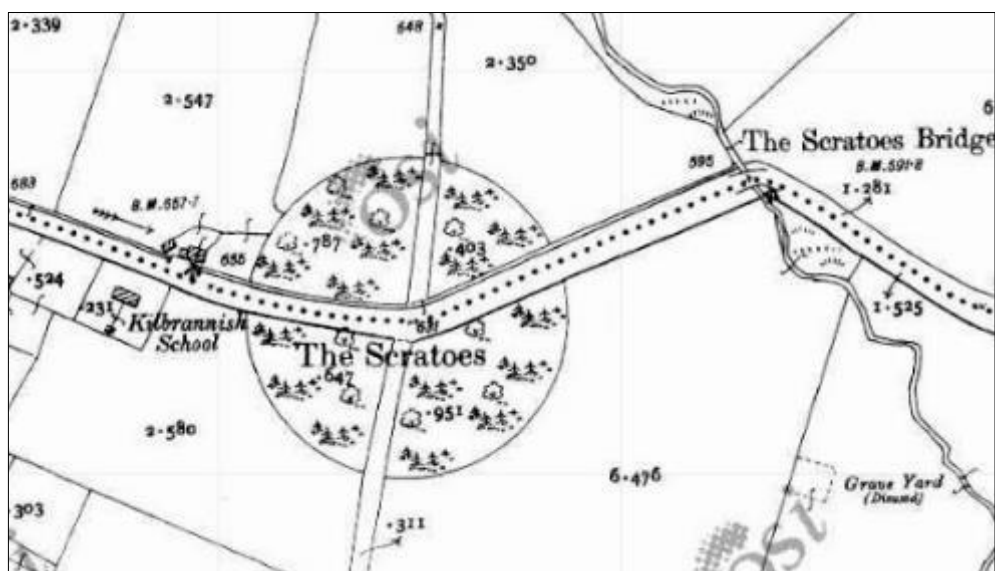


Figure 70 The enclosure shown on the 2nd Edition O.S. map (archaeology.ie)



Figure 71 aerial images showing the southwest section of the enclosure before and after clearance (images archaeology.ie & Google Earth)

18. **Site type:** Enclosure/ringfort (not upstanding) **Townland:** Crowsgrove

ITM: 689310 660452

RMP No.: CW018-020

Site description: A sub-circular enclosure (dimensions c. 57m NW-SE; c. 50m NE-SW) visible as a cropmark on Google Earth (imagery date 14 July 2018). The southwest sector is less clearly defined.

19. **Site type:** Enclosure/barrow (not upstanding)

Townland: Ballyshancarragh

ITM: 687728 660107

RMP No.: CW017-071



Site description: A roughly circular enclosure (diameter c. 22m) identified as a cropmark on satellite imagery. Two other smaller, overlapping enclosures (CW018-022 & CW018-023) are also visible c. 40m to the northeast (see below). This size and layout of this monument could indicate that it is a prehistoric barrow.



Figure 72 Enclosures at Ballyshancarragh

- 20. Site type:** Prehistoric ring ditch (not upstanding) **Townland:** Ballyshancarragh
ITM: 687776 660154 **RMP No.** CW018-023
Site description: A small circular enclosure (diameter c. 13m) identified as the cropmark on satellite imagery. A similarly sized enclosure (CW018-022) appears to underlie the southwest sector. A larger enclosure (CW018-071) is also visible as a cropmark c. 40m to the southwest (see previous).
- 21. Site type:** Prehistoric ring ditch (not upstanding) **Townland:** Ballyshancarragh
ITM: 687773 660146 **RMP No.** CW018-022
Site description: A small circular enclosure (diameter c. 13m) identified as the cropmark on satellite imagery. A similarly sized enclosure (CW018-023) overlaps the northeast sector. A larger enclosure (CW018-071) is also visible as a cropmark c. 40m to the southwest.
- 22. Site type:** Enclosure/ringfort (not upstanding) **Townland:** Raheen
ITM: 687991 661372 **RMP No:** CW018-011



Site description: Shown on the 1st Edition O.S. map (1839) as a circular enclosure circa 40m in diameter. No trace of the site was noted during the Archaeological Survey of Co. Carlow. This monument was most likely a ringfort and it probably gave the townland its name, as *Raheen* translates as 'little fort'.



Figure 73 Raheen ringfort on the 1st Edition O.S. map (archaeology.ie)

23. **Site type:** Enclosure/ringfort (not upstanding)

Townland: Craan

ITM: 688616 662599

RMP No.: CW018-008

Site description: This monument is shown as a circular enclosure on the 1st Edition O.S. map (1839) It measured circa 35m in diameter and was locally thought to be a ringfort. The site was levelled in c. 1983.

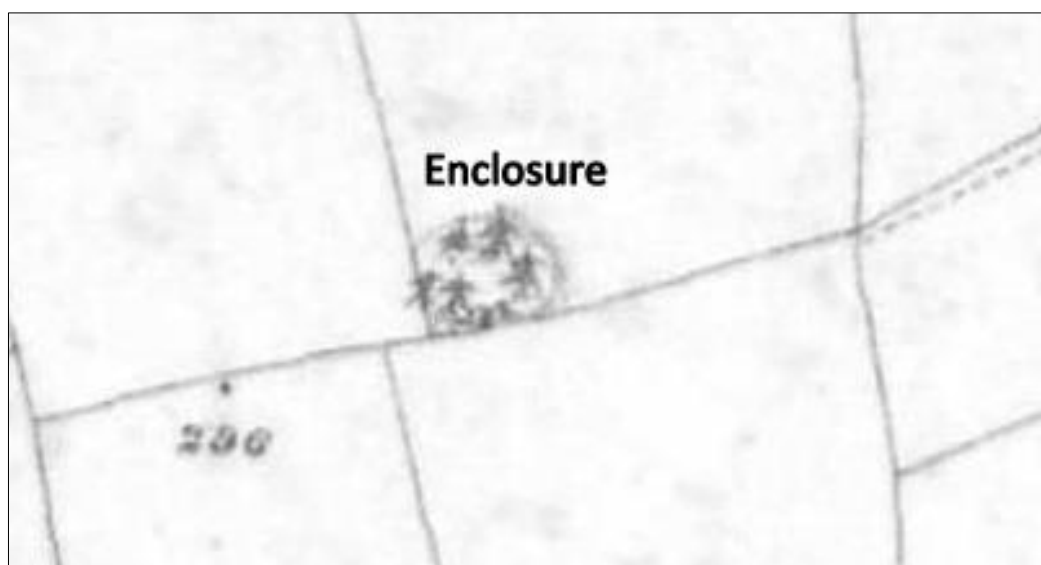


Figure 746 The levelled Craan enclosure illustrated on the 1st Edition O.S. map (archaeology.ie)



24. **Site type:** Enclosure/ringfort (not upstanding) **Townland:** Kilbride
ITM: 687653 663478 **RMP No.:** CW017-063

Site description: In a tillage field. Identified as a cropmark on Google Earth Pro satellite imagery (imagery date 14 July 2018) by Jean-Charles Caillère and Simon Dowling. A roughly oval enclosure (diameter c. 40m NE-SW; c. 45m NW-SW) visible as the cropmark of a fosse, with an outer fosse 8-10m from the inner fosse. This feature may be an early medieval ringfort.



Figure 75 Double ditched enclosure/ringfort at Kilbride (Google Earth)

25. **Site type:** Tree Ring/enclosure (not upstanding) **Townland:** Kilbride
ITM: 686511 664683 **RMP No.** CW017-007

Site description: Appears as a tree-ring on the 1st Edition O. S. map (1839). No visible remains at ground level. This may have been an 18th century designed landscape feature, or possibly, an earlier enclosure.



Figure 76 The tree ring/enclosure at Kilbride on the 1st Edition O.S. map (1839)



26. **Site type:** Tree Ring/enclosure (not upstanding) **Townland:** Kilbride
ITM: 686716 663956 **RMP No.** CW017-008

Site description: Appears as a small, enclosed feature on the 1839 OS 6-inch map. Field boundary now runs across site and only a slight rise visible. Probably a landscape feature associated with Kilbride House.

27. **Site type:** Church (not upstanding) **Townland:** Kilbride
ITM: 686758 665051 **RMP Nos.** CW017-009

Site description: O'Toole writing in 1933 (JKAS 1933, 258) records a tradition of old church ruins formerly on the 'Bleach Green' of the Kilbride estate, though no remains survived at that time.

28. **Site type:** Prehistoric barrow (not upstanding) **Townland:** Milltown
ITM: 685375 663345 **RMP Nos.** CW017-019

Site description: Shown as very small circular feature on the Second Edition O.S. map (1908). Described as small circular enclosure (diameter c. 15m) defined by low bank, and similar to Ballon ring-barrow (CW013-074) (Local information). No visible surface traces survive.

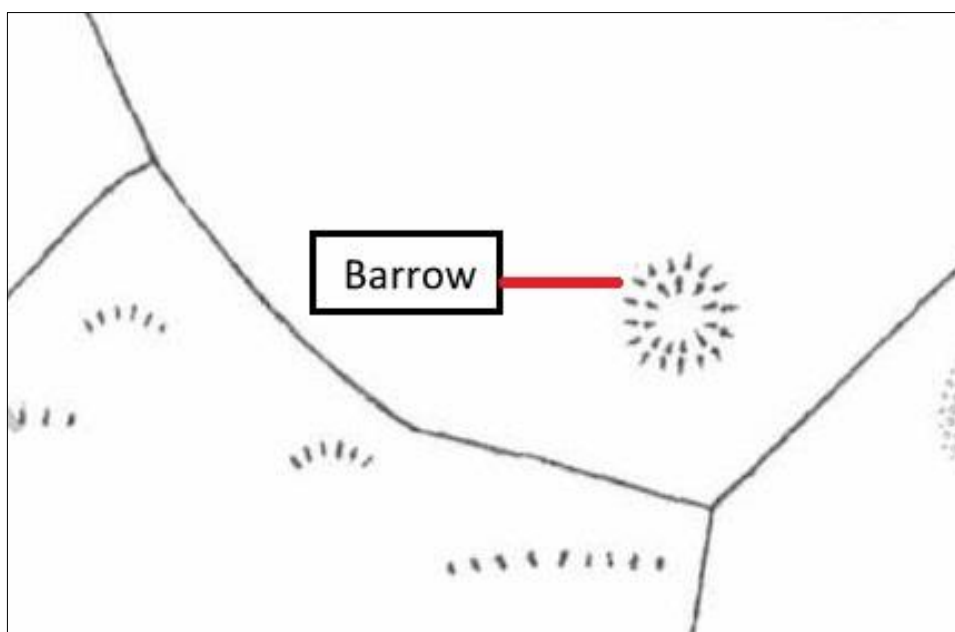


Figure 77 Possible barrow at Milltown on the 2nd Edition O.S. map (archaeology.ie)



29. Site type: Burial ground (not upstanding) **Townland:** Milltown
ITM: 684893 663712 **RMP No.:** CW017-017

Site description: A disused and unenclosed graveyard visible as stony and uncultivated patch (dimensions c. 5m x 7m). Small cairn of unknown antiquity, recorded by O'Toole (JKAS 1933, 245). Now improved grassland.

30. Site type: Holy Well (not upstanding) **Townland:** Milltown
ITM 684493 663952 **RMP No.** CW017-018

Site description: According to O'Toole writing in 1933 (JKAS 1933, 245) there was a 'Brides Well', in Milltown which was reputed to be 'holy' (although there was no patron day associated with it). The field where it was located is now drained and the well in longer extant.



7. Built Heritage

The Kildavin area retains much of its original character and it contains a good collection of 19th buildings, as well as several distinctive pieces of street furniture and vernacular metalwork. The Protected structures found in Kildavin and its surrounds are listed in Table 3, while features such as churches, bridges, estate walls and vernacular farm buildings are discussed in more detail below in Sections 7.2-7.4. Sources used in this study include the Architectural Inventory for Co. Carlow, the List of Protected Structures for Co. Carlow and the author's own notes from fieldwork.

7.1 Protected Structures

Comprehensive and systematic legislative provisions for the protection of the architectural, archaeological and natural heritage were introduced by the government with the implementation of the Planning & Development Act in 2000, which has been amended in various points since. The 2000 Act set out the development plan as the basic policy document of the planning authority in which the overall strategy and specific objectives for sustainable development and proper planning within an area are set out⁶³. The legislation requires that each planning authority renew its development plan every six years. The planning authority have an obligation to create a record of protected structures (RPS) which lists structures of architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social, or technical interest. This record forms part of the planning authority's development plan⁶⁴. There are thirteen Protected Structures in Kildavin and these are listed in Table 3.

| Description | Location | Protected Structure Number |
|--|--|----------------------------|
| St. Lazerian's , early 19th century church | Kildavin village | CW47 |
| St. Paul's, early 19th century church | Kildavin village | CW360 |
| Kildavin House, 18th century house | Kildavin village | CW332 |
| Kildavin bridge | River Slaney at Kildavin/ Ballyshonock | CW331 |
| Kilcarry bridge | River Slaney at Kilcarry/Craan | CW54 |
| Sherwood Park House, 18th century mansion | Sherwood Park | CW76 |
| 18th century entrance gateway | Sherwood Park | CW474 |
| 19th century water fountain | Carrickduff | CW231 |
| Early 19th century house | Carrickduff | CW232 |
| Ravenswood House, early 19th century house | Glebe | CW291 |
| 19th century farmhouse | Kilbrannish South | CW314 |
| Old School House | Barnahask | CW178 |
| Old forge | Kilbride | CW172 |

Table 3: List of Protected Structures in Kildavin

⁶³ Grist 2012, 11

⁶⁴ DAHG 2011, 15



7.2 Parish Churches

Kildavin village contains two churches, St. Lazerian's and St. Paul's, both of which date from the early 19th century. These finely built structures represent an important part of the county Carlow's ecclesiastical heritage. The social significance of the sites is also considerable, providing testament to the communities that worshiped in the churches and buried their dead in the surrounding graveyards.

St. Lazerian's church, Kildavin (NIAH⁶⁵ No.: 10301818; Protect Structure Reference: CW47)

Description: The catholic parish church, St. Lazerian's was built in circa 1830, with the bellcote added in 1842. It represents one of the new 'modern' chapels which were built in Carlow after the penal laws were relaxed. Often called barn chapels, these buildings were largely constructed by local craftsmen without formal qualifications. They were large, slated, stone or rubble built, with flagged or tiled floors; normally they had a gallery or galleries to cater for increased numbers; they remained sparsely decorated in the interior, and they were without pews⁶⁶. Simple in plan, sturdy in execution, sparing in decoration (the altar area sometimes an exception), these big chapels expressed the pragmatism and poverty out of which they grew.⁶⁷

The chapel was extensively renovated in the 1860s, at cost of £240, £70 of which was donated by the local Protestant community⁶⁸. Additional funds were raised by the parish priest, Father Dunne, who auctioned off church seats to local families, the most expensive fetching £25 and the cheapest £7. These works saw the roof replaced, the church ornamented, seating provided and a flag floor introduced. The latter work was carried out by the Grennan family of Deerpark, Kildavin. Further renovations were carried out in the early 20th century and in 1975.

The church presents as a detached, five-bay, single-cell building with a porch entrance on its southern side. It has pointed-arch windows with Y-tracery, a slate roof and a small belfry on its western gable. The church interior is well maintained. On the wall behind the 20th century wooden altar, is a fine curved pediment arch, supported by classical style columns. This bears the Latin inscription '*Hic Domus Dei est, et Porta Coeli*' (This is God's house, and gate of heaven). Other distinctive features include two fine stained-glass windows in the north wall and a granite holy water stoop adjacent the entrance. The stained-glass windows date from circa 1915 and were sponsored by Mrs Anne Nolan.

The church graveyard is tidy with mown grass (but not too tightly) and numerous wildflowers were present, including white clover, daisies and buttercups. Occasional spot use of weed killer was noted, mainly around graves. From a wildlife perspective, this should not be encouraged. The cemetery contains a mix of 19th and 20th century headstones, including one wrought iron example and a number of fine granite pedestal-type grave markers. Of historic interest, is the headstone of Charles Bryne, Staff Captain IRA, who was accidentally killed during the Irish Civil War.

⁶⁵ National Inventory of Architectural Heritage

⁶⁶ Whelan 1983, 8

⁶⁷ *Ibid*, 8

⁶⁸ Carlow Post, 23-7-1862 & Carlow Post, 3-9-1864



Photos



Figure 78 St. Lazerian's church



Figure 79 Inside St. Lazerian's



Figure 80 Stained glass windows



Figure 81 Granite holy water font and altar area



Figure 82 St Lazerian's church and graveyard, looking north



Figure 83 St. Lazerian's church and graveyard, looking south



Figure 84 Iron cross and pedestal headstone



Figure 85 Pedestal headstone and historic headstone related to Civil War



St. Paul's church, Kildavin (NIAH Number 10301819; Protect Structure Reference: CW360)

Description: St Paul's Church of Ireland is a First Fruits church which built with a grant of £800 in 1812⁶⁹. It is constructed out of granite ashlar with a nave of three bays and a slender, three-stage, tower with English-style crenellations and pinnacles. A polygonal apse and vestry in granite ashlar were added about 1880. The nave has its original Y-tracery windows with small panes. The roof has natural slates. The graveyard is neat and tidy and contains a number of 19th and 20th century headstones.



Figure 86 St Paul's church



Figure 87 St. Paul's church

⁶⁹ Lewis 1837, 188



Figure 88 Relieving arch in the northern wall of St. Paul's church



Figure 89 Church doorway and noticeboard



7.3 Bridges

Kildavin contains two late 18th/early 19th century bridges which traverse the River Slaney at Kildavin and Craan respectively. These are large and finely built structures that contain multiple arches and are an important part of Carlow's civil engineering heritage. In addition, there are several smaller, single, and double arched bridges within Barragh parish, which are built out of local stone, with granite parapets and ashlar⁷⁰ voussoirs⁷¹. They include bridges located in Craan, Ballyshancarragh and Kildavin village. Most likely dating from the early 19th century, these also represent an integral component of the civil engineering heritage of Co. Carlow. The two larger bridges are discussed in more detail below.



Figure 90 Location of bridges noted during the Heritage Audit

⁷⁰ Ashlar is finely dressed/cut stone

⁷¹ A voussoir is a wedge-shaped stone used in building an arch



7.3.1 Kildavin bridge (Young's bridge) (NIAH Number: 15700405; Protect Structure Reference: CW331).

Description: This large, six-arch, rubble-stone built bridge crosses the river Slaney between the townlands of Kildavin and Ballyshonock. It contains tall arches, with finely cut ashlar voussoirs and triangular cutwaters. The bridge dates from circa 1800. A plaque on the Clonegal side of the bridge has an inscription which says: *'Before the Bridge and this road existed the river Derry was crossed by means of a ford located at the end of a lane that came over Drumderry Hill. Here emigrants from Clonegal parish had their last view of their native valley and the Wicklow Hills, here too they made their final goodbye to their relatives'*.



Figure 91 Kildavin bridge



Figure 92 Kildavin bridge



7.3.2 Kilbarry bridge (NIAH Number: 10301801; Protect Structure Reference: Not applicable).

Description: This five-arch, hump-back road bridge crosses the river Slaney between the townlands of Craan and Kilbarry. Dating from circa 1800, it is rubble built with ashlar voussoirs and cut waters. A distinctive hump is noticeable in the bridge surface at road level.

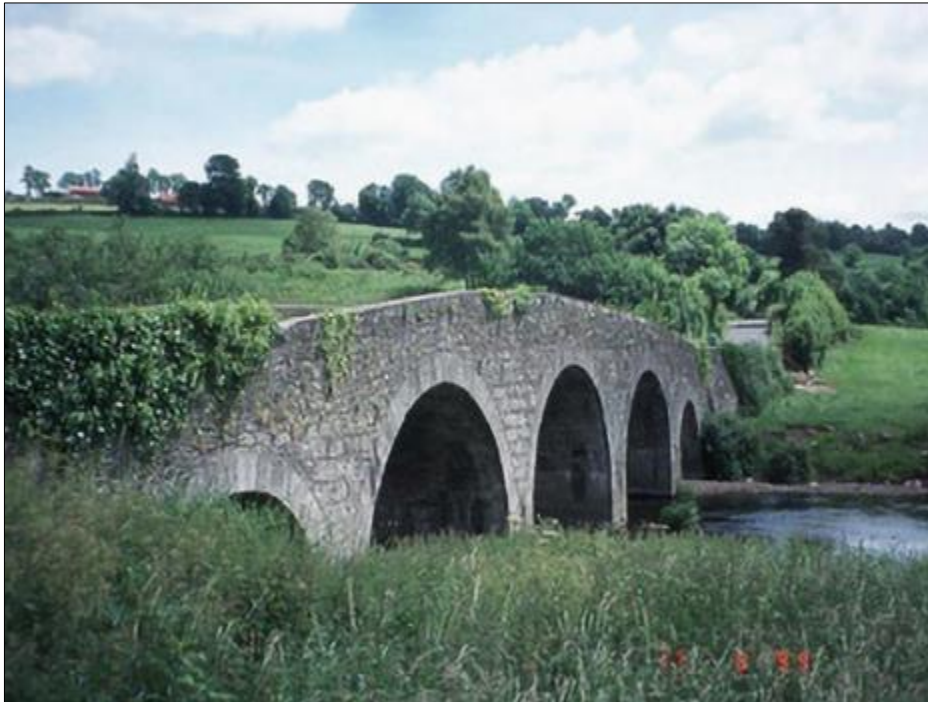


Figure 93 Kilbarry bridge (NIAH)



Figure 94 Kilbarry bridge



7.4 Estate features and stone walls

In the northern part of the study area a number of features associated with large country houses were noted. These include a very fine entrance attached to Sherwood Park house, a section of walled garden, also belonging to Sherwood Park House and an extensive stretch of estate wall associated with Kilbride house. In the south of the study area a large wall was also identified in Deerpark Old townland. This dry-stone wall survives to over 2m in height and appears to extend for close 5km in length (with some breaks). This impressive wall was originally built to prevent deer escaping from an enclosed deer park. The scale of these features provides an interesting historical insight into the extensive resources needed to run and maintain a large country estate during the 18th and 19th centuries.

Entrance Gates, Sherwood Park (NIAH Number: 10301712; Protect Structure Reference: CW474)

Description: There is a very impressive entrance leading into Sherwood Park house. Dating from circa 1750, it is defined by a pair of tall pillars with cornices and urns. This design is based on the work of the noted 18th century architect James Gibbs and they are the only set of pillars with this form found in Ireland⁷². The piers are flanked by pedestrian gates, quadrant walls and outer piers which originally had balls. The entrance gates are of wrought iron and date from the mid-19th century.



Figure 95 Entrance to Sherwood Park House

⁷² National Inventory of Architectural Heritage



Figure 96 Entrance into Sherwood Park house



Figure 97 Urns on top of entrance pillars



Estate Wall, Kilbride townland (NIAH Number: None; Protect Structure Reference: None)

Description: On the approach road to Altamon gardens there is a fine stretch of granite wall, which defines the northern side of Kilbride townland. This estate wall was associated with Kilbride House, a mansion which is no longer extant. Built out of roughly hewn granite blocks, the wall extends for several hundred meters and is up to 2m high places. This well-built wall probably dates from the 19th century.



Figure 98 Granite wall, Kilbride townland



Figure 99 Granite estate wall, Kilbride town



Figure 100 Granite estate wall, Kilbride townland



Figure 101 Granite estate wall, Kilbride townland



Figure 102 Granite estate wall, Kilbride townland



Figure 103 Granite estate wall, Kilbride townland



Walled Garden, Sherwood Park townland (NIAH Number: None; Protect Structure Reference: None)

Description: A second stretch of granite wall is also found along the road leading to Altamon Gardens, where it defines the southern part of Sherwood Park townland. This wall is built out of unhewn granite field stones and it measures in excess of 2m in height. It originally formed part of a walled garden associated with Sherwood Park house and it most likely dates from the mid to late 18th century.



Figure 104 Granite estate wall, Sherwood Park townland



Figure 105 Granite estate wall, Sherwood Park



Deer park wall, Deerpark Old townland (NIAH Number: None; Protect Structure Reference: None)

Description: In the south of the study area a large wall was identified in Deerpark Old townland (thanks to the help of Jim Fitzharris). This dry-stone wall survives to over 2m in height and may extend for up to 5km in length (with some breaks). It appears to define the entire townland boundary, but a full survey is required to determine its true extent. This impressive wall was originally built to prevent deer escaping from an enclosed park. Deer parks were first introduced to Ireland by the Normans, though they only became the dominant feature in Ireland during the 17th and 18th centuries, after which their numbers declined with the ascendance of fox⁷³. Indeed, Reeves-Smyth has argued that the majority of Irish deer parks date from between 1620 and 1740⁷⁴ and a similar date range may be suggested for the wall at Deerpark Old. The wall was certainly extent in 1839 as its outline is illustrated on the 1st Edition Ordnance Survey map. This map also shows a 'Deerpark New' to the south of 'Deerpark Old', indicating that a multi-phase system of enclosure may have taken place here.

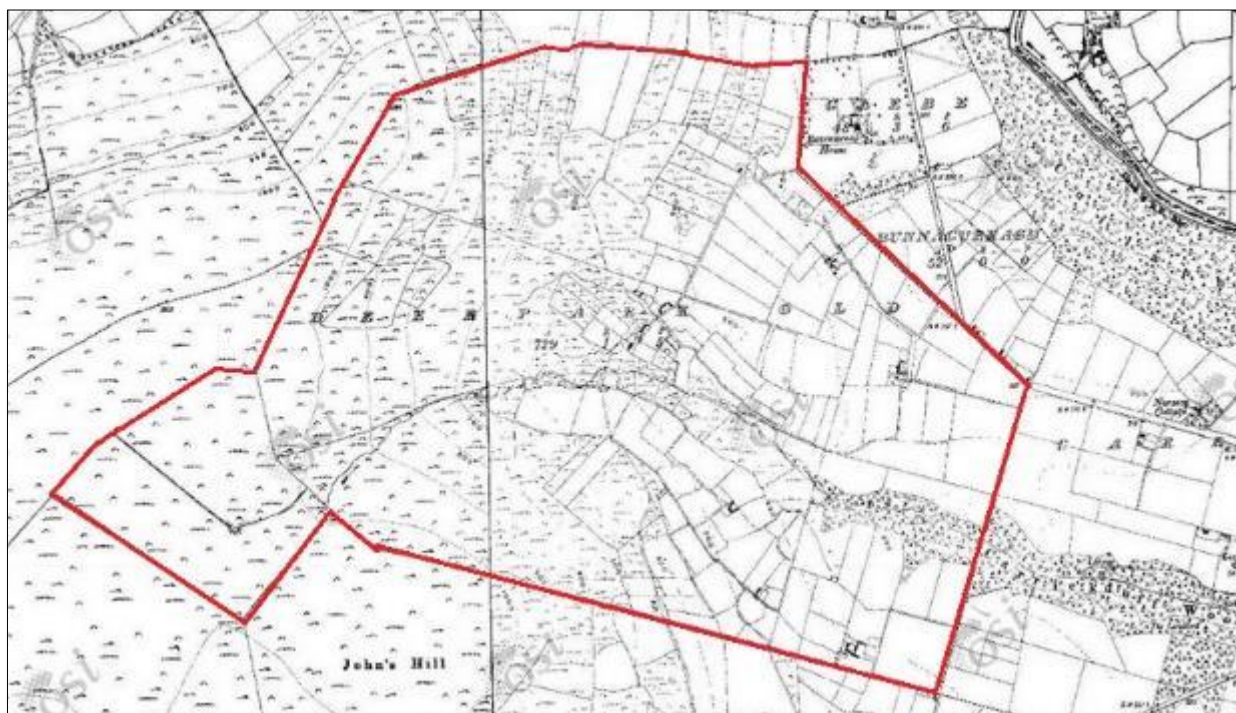


Figure 106 the outline of Deerpark Old townland on the 1st Edition O.S. map of 1839 (archaeology.ie)

⁷³ Reeves-Smyth 2017, 231

⁷⁴ *ibid*, 241



Figure 107 The deer park wall



Figure 108 the deer park wall



Figure 109 The deer park wall



7.5 Vernacular farm buildings

Vernacular farm buildings were designed and built by local communities who used traditional materials and resources from the area where the building is located⁷⁵. These distinctive structures are very much in harmony with their local setting and represent an important part of our rural architectural heritage. Kildavin contains a fine collection of vernacular farm buildings, and these should be maintained and retained wherever possible. Many of these structures are finely built using locally sourced granite and this reflects the area's strong tradition of stone masonry. Of particular interest was a stone-built pig house in Deerpark Old that contained a date stone with 1825 inscribed on it, indicating that this vernacular building is nearly 200 years old.



Figure 110 Vernacular farm building at Ballypierce



Figure 111 Vernacular farm buildings at Craan

⁷⁵ O'Reilly B. & Murray C., Built and Natural Heritage Series 2, 2



Figure 112 Vernacular farm building at Barnahask



Figure 113 Vernacular farm building at Deerpark Old



Figure 114 Vernacular farm building at Deerpark Old that contains a stone dated 1825



Figure 115 Vernacular farm buildings at Deerpark Old



Figure 116 Vernacular farm building at Kilbrannish South



Figure 117 Vernacular farm building at Kildavin village



8. Wrought Iron Gates & Granite Piers

8.1 A number of wrought iron gates were noted during the heritage survey and these most likely date from 19th and early 20th centuries. While some of the gates may have been produced at enterprises such as Pierce's of Wexford or Keenan's of Bagnelstown, the majority were probably hand-forged by local blacksmiths. Indeed, in the 1930s Kildavin contained '*three or four forges*' and these made a wide range of objects including '*gates*'⁷⁶. These old gates represent beautiful pieces of vernacular ironwork and are an important part of our rural heritage.

Unfortunately, wrought iron gates such as these are rapidly disappearing from our landscape. During the twentieth century cast-iron, tubular steel and other mass-produced gates became more common while at the same time wrought iron gates went into decline as did the blacksmiths forge⁷⁷. In addition to this, changing farming practices demanded larger field openings and this led to many forged gates being discarded due to their small size. Sadly, this has resulted in the loss of many gates and these once common features of the countryside now becoming increasingly scarce. This is unfortunate as they represent a distinctive part of our agrarian history, and they are deserving of care and respect.

At least 20 iron gates were identified in Kildavin during this Heritage Audit and there are undoubtedly more to be found. A future project could involve carrying out a comprehensive survey of the wrought iron gates found in Kildavin and its surrounds. This project could also seek to identify the names of local blacksmiths and where their forges were located. Similar projects have recently been carried out in Westmeath⁷⁸, Galway⁷⁹ and Kilkenny⁸⁰ with support from the Heritage Council.

⁷⁶ The Schools' Collection, Volume 0911, Page 280

⁷⁷ <https://www.ouririshheritage.org/content/archive/topics/miscellaneous/galway-forged-gates-project-launch>

⁷⁸ <https://www.westmeathindependent.ie/2023/05/22/new-project-inviting-communities-to-record-wrought-iron-gates-in-westmeath/>

⁷⁹ <https://www.ouririshheritage.org/content/archive/topics/miscellaneous/galway-forged-gates-project-launch>

⁸⁰ <https://kilkennyheritage.ie/2015/03/vernacular-forged-wrought-iron-gates-of-county-kilkenny/>



Figure 118 Iron gate in Kildavin village



Figure 119 Iron gate Kildavin village



Figure 120 Double iron gate in Barragh townland



Figure 121 Double iron gate in Ballinvally townland



Figure 722 Iron gate in Knockbarragh townland



Figure 123 Iron gate in Craan townland



Figure 124 Iron gate in Craan townland



Figure 125 Double iron gate in Kilbride townland



Figure 126 locking bolt with starburst design, Kilbride townland



Figure 127 Double iron gate in Sherwood townland



Figure 828 Iron gate at Sherwood Park townland



Figure 129 iron gate in Ballypierce townland



Figure 130 Double iron gate Kilbride townland



Figure 131 fallen iron gate in Kilbride townland



Figure 132 Double iron gate in Sherwoodpark townland



Figure 133 Iron gate in Kilbrannish townland



Figure 134 iron gate in Barnahask townland



Figure 135 Iron gate at Deerpark Old townland



Figure 136 Iron gate at Deerpark Old townland



Figure 937 Iron gate at Barragh townland



8.2 Granite gate pillars

A distinctive feature of the countryside around Kildavin is the use of granite gate pillars in many of the fields. These reflect a strong tradition of stone working in the community, as exemplified by the Grennan family of Deerpark Old, who were master stonemasons in the 19th century⁸¹. The material for these gate posts was sourced locally and often consisted of large granite boulders, which were split with wedges. An example of the latter can still be seen the field of Jim Grennan of Deerpark Old. However, these granite gateposts are now becoming increasingly rare, as they are often not replaced when gates are widened to facilitate farm machinery. This is unfortunate as the gateposts represent an important part of Kildavin's rural architectural heritage and they should be retained wherever possible.



Figure 138 Granite boulder in Deerpark Old with wedge marks

⁸¹ Pers. Comm. Jim Fitzharris



Figure 139 Granite gatepost in Deerpark Old townland



Figure 140 Granite gateposts in Deerpark Old townland



Figure 141 Granite gateposts in Barragh townland



Figure 142 Granite gatepost in Barnahask townland



Figure 143 Gatepost at Barnahask and Deerpark New townlands



Figure 144 Granite pillars/piers at Deerpark Old townland



9. Cast iron Street furniture (water pumps & post boxes)

Five cast-iron pieces of street furniture were noted during the Heritage Audit. These included four water-pumps/hydrants, located at Carrickduff, Crowsgrove, Bunnagurrah and Kildavin village respectively as well as a wall-mounted post box which is situated in Kilbrannish. These are discussed below.



Figure 145 Location of cast-iron water pumps (blue) and the post box (green)

9.1 Water pumps/hydrants

Three of the four surviving cast-iron water pumps in Kildavin are of similar form. They are free-standing, with fluted necks, caps and spouts, horizontal bands on the shafts and 'cow-tail' handles. The example at Bunnagurrah also contains a foundry mark belonging to Jessop and Davis. This Enniscorthy based company operated between 1908 and 1962. There is also a 19th century water fountain/hydrant at Carrickduff, which is of different design. This feature is a Protected Structure (CW231) and consists of an iron spout set in a stone surround. These water pumps/hydrants played an important social role in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries by providing a communal water source for the people of Kildavin. They now serve as attractive pieces of street furniture, which aesthetically enhance their surroundings.



Figure 1046 Water pump, Crowsgrove



Figure 147 Water pump, Crowsgrove



Figure 148 Water pump at Bunnagurragh



Figure 149 Water pump at Bunnagurragh



Figure 150 Water pump in Kildavin village



Figure 151 Water pump Kildavin village



Figure 152 19th century water spout at Carrickduff



Figure 153 19th century water spout at Carrickduff



9.2 Post box

The remains of an early 20th century wall mounted post box is located at Kilbrannish. It predates the foundation of the Irish state and bears the royal cipher of George V, who was king of England from 1910 to 1936. Originally red in colour, it was painted a patriotic green after Irish independence. The post box was made by W. T. Allen & Co. of London and is in good condition, apart from a missing door.



Figure 154 Post box at Kilbrannish



10. Potential Funding Sources

The enhancement of the heritage assets in Kildavin will require on-going funding supports over several years. There are a range of funding streams available that would help to enhance and protect the important heritage assets found in the village and its surrounds. These are discussed below. Carlow County Council's Heritage officer will be able to give further advice and guidance on these schemes, many of which are administered through the County Council.

10.1 Community Monuments Fund

The core objective of the Community Monuments Fund is to support the conservation, maintenance, protection and promotion of local monuments and historic sites. It contains a number of different measures aimed at enabling conservation works to be carried out on archaeological monuments (RMPS) which are deemed to be significant and in need of urgent support, encouraging access to archaeological monuments and improving their presentation and also building resilience in archaeological monuments to enable them to withstand the effects of climate change. This fund is administered by Carlow Council and covers 100% of the proposed works with no match funding required. The application is made by the council in conjunction with a licence eligible archaeologist.

The Community Monuments Fund has 3 Streams:

Stream 1: offers grants up to €100,000 aimed at essential repairs and capital works for the conservation and repair of archaeological monuments.

Stream 2: offers grants of up to €30,000 for development of Conservation Management Plans/Reports that are aimed at identifying measures for conservation of archaeological monuments and improving public access.

Stream 3: offers grants of up to €30,000 for enhancement of access infrastructure and interpretation (including virtual/online) at archaeological monuments.

Eligible projects will be drawn from the following categories:

1. Projects proposed by a Local Authority in relation to archaeological monuments in public ownership, where a clear heritage focus and community or public benefit has been demonstrated.
2. Projects proposed by a Local Authority on foot of applications from private applicants who are the owners or custodians of relevant archaeological monuments where there is a tangible public benefit
3. Projects with a clearly defined heritage focus and community or public benefit proposed directly to the Department by a State-funded organisation working in the heritage area.



10.2 Community Heritage Grant Scheme

The aim of this scheme is to support capital projects that improve access and inclusion to heritage sites; that apply good heritage practice to the management of places, collections, or objects (including buildings). The scheme also supports the purchase of essential equipment. This scheme is intended to enable communities and heritage non-governmental organisations (NGOs) to continue their work in this area or to start new initiatives. The Heritage Council has allocated in the region of €1,500,000 to this scheme in 2023 to undertake capital works that will apply good heritage practice in managing and improving access to sites, collections, objects etc. The most you may ask for is 80% of the funding of the total project expenditure, up to a maximum of €25,000. This funding is allocated by the Heritage Council.

10.3 Heritage Council's Traditional Farm Buildings Grant

The Heritage Council in partnership with the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine offer grants for farm buildings, not farm houses, being maintained in use for farm purposes, not being converted. The grant is available for the conservation of the exterior appearance of traditional farm outbuildings, including roof, walls, windows and doors, and associated structures including historic yard surfaces, gate pillars and gates. Owner must be in an active agri-environment scheme such as ACRES, REAP or approved participants of the Organic Farming scheme. Grants between €4,000 and €30,000 offered, up to 75% of cost of approved works. The key conservation principle of minimum intervention applies, that is, carrying out a repair to fix what is wrong but not setting out to do too much work. Works which are, in the opinion of the Heritage Council, restoration works, are very unlikely to be supported with grant aid.

10.4 Historic Structures Fund

The Historic Structures Fund (HSF) supports the custodians and owners of protected structures in maintaining and safeguarding their historic properties with grants, ranging from €15,000 to €200,000, offered (up to 80% of costs) to assist in essential conservation and repair works. It is administered by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage in partnership with thirty-one local authorities. The primary focus of the Historic Structures Fund is on conservation and enhancement of historic structures and buildings for the benefit of communities and the public.

The Historic Structures Fund provides capital funding for works to qualifying structures which include the following:

- (i) Protected Structures:** Structures in the Record of Protected Structures (RPS) of each Local Authority
- (ii) Structures eligible for or proposed for inclusion in the RPS** but not yet formally approved for inclusion. Such structures must meet the criteria for inclusion in the RPS by the Local Authority, i.e. must be of special interest from an architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical point of view;
- (iii) Structures or works within Architectural Conservation Areas (ACAs)**



The Historic Structures Fund has three main Streams in 2023:

The Historic Structures Fund 2023 will be structured as follows:

1. **Stream 1** offers grants from €15,000 up to €50,000 and is aimed at essential repairs and smaller capital works for the refurbishment and conservation of heritage structures.

Stream 1, Historic Shopfronts sub-stream – To incentivise the conservation of historic shopfronts, each Local Authority is invited to submit an additional application under Stream 1 for eligible essential repairs and small capital works for the refurbishment and conservation of historic shop facades, windows, signage and other associated details to safeguard them and keep them in use. Local Authorities are also invited to make an additional application for Irish-language shopfronts.
2. **Stream 2** offers a small number of grants from €50,000 up to €200,000 for larger enhancement, refurbishment or reuse projects involving heritage structures, where:
 - a. A clear community or public benefit has been demonstrated, or
 - b. A clear residential benefit has been demonstrated (such projects must be advanced through the planning process as necessary).
3. **Vernacular Structures Stream** - The purpose of the stream is to support conservation repairs and small capital works to vernacular structures that are not listed in local authority Records of Protected Structures or otherwise legally protected. Such structures may be located within an Architectural Conservation Area. All local authorities can apply for funding for specific projects of between €5,000 and €10,000 for eligible projects.

Who can apply for the Vernacular Structures Stream?

- a) Owners of vernacular structures that are not listed in a Record of Protected Structures
- b) Owners of vernacular structures within an Architectural Conservation Area, but not otherwise subject to statutory protection.

10.5 Built Heritage Investment Scheme

The Built Heritage Investment Scheme (BHIS) assists custodians and owners of protected structures, and structures within Architectural Conservation Areas. The BHIS is not limited to private dwellings and gives valuable financial assistance to a wide range of heritage sites. Examples awarded funding under the BHIS 2023 include the conservation of the historic glass at Drumcogh Hill Church Hall in County Cavan; the stabilisation of the masonry at the former Methodist Church in Blackrock, County Dublin; the replastering of The Wonderful Barn in County Kildare; the repair of the roofs of three houses in Banim Terrace, Kilkenny and the reinstatement of cobbling at a cottage in County Meath. The BHIS is one of two built heritage funding schemes run by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage working in partnership with the 31 local authorities and their Architectural Conservation Officers and Heritage Officers. Grants of up to €15,000 are available through this scheme offered (up to 50% of costs).



10.6 Village Renewal Schemes

The village renewal schemes administered through the Department of Rural and Community Development can be a significant source of heritage funding for local communities.



11. Proposed Future Works

This section proposes 10 future works which may be carried out in Kildavin to enhance the localities heritage assets. It also suggests possible avenues of assistance and potential funding sources.

11.1 Barragh church

Barragh church is the oldest upstanding building in Kildavin and it represents a significant heritage asset. In this section a number of works are suggested for the site, including a conservation management plan, a geophysical survey and conservation repairs.

Conservation works.

Barragh church is currently in poor condition and requires conservation work. A large crack is evident in the northwest corner of the building and if not rectified, could lead to masonry collapse. There is also extensive ivy growth along the western and southern walls of the building. The roots of these plants are quite substantial and are weakening the structure of the church by loosening masonry and eroding mortar joints. It is proposed that a conservation plan be drawn up for the church in 2024, followed by a programme of conservation repairs in 2025. This work could be funded by the Community Monuments Fund. It is also suggested that a geophysical survey be carried out at the site to assess what sub-surface archaeological remains may survive.

Proposed works in 2024 based on successful Stream 2 Community Monuments Fund (CMF) application (conservation management plan)

Conservation plan for the church incorporating all the following elements and involving a multidisciplinary team:

- Architectural conservation report for church which will identify the main structural issues affecting the building and what remedial actions can be taken.
- Archaeological report for the site. This will detail the historic and archaeological significance of the church.
- Ecology report to inform on best practice and to enhance the biodiversity of the church grounds and outline a future maintenance scheme for the site.
- A measured survey of the church.

Proposed works in 2024 based on a successful Stream 3 CMF application (geophysical survey)

- The area surrounding Barragh church is likely to contain sub-surface archaeological remains. To gain more information about the site a geophysical survey could be carried out with ground penetrating radar. This would allow an informed assessment to be made of what archaeological remains survive at the site and what these features might represent. The results of this work could be publicly disseminated through an illustrated pamphlet or journal articles in publications such as the *Carloviana*.



Proposed Works 2025 based on successful Stream 1 CMF application (conservation repairs)

- Implement actions as outlined in conservation management plan. Carry out essential repairs to the church which will ensure the long-term survival of this important historic building.

10.2 Barragh graveyard

The old graveyard at Barragh is very overgrown and it is currently impossible to see any headstones at the site.

Future Proposals

A programme of works should be drawn up for the site which would see some of the excess vegetation being trimmed/controlled. Carlow County Council most likely own this site⁸², and they may be able to assist with these works. Before commencing any work on the graveyard, it is best to consult with Carlow County Council's Heritage Officer who will provide guidance on best practise. The Heritage Council has also published an advice booklet entitled 'Guidance for the Care, Conservation and Recording of Historic Graveyards', which can be downloaded at [Publications & Reports - Heritage Council](#). It is recommended that all persons working with historic graveyards download a copy of this document.

| Do's | Don't |
|---|--|
| Contact Carlow County Council's Heritage Officer and the National Monuments Service for advice before you commence works. | Don't remove any vegetation from graveyard walls without professional advice. Doing so may affect the structural integrity of the remaining walls and have ecological implications in terms of birds and bats. |
| To properly manage the grassland as a biodiversity-rich resource, it should not be cut between March and September to allow the species within it to flower and seed. | Don't bring any mechanical excavators or dumpers within the confines of a historic graveyard without professional advice. These machines cause damage to the historic character of the site. |
| Check who owns the historic graveyard; Barragh graveyard appears to belong to Carlow County Council. | Don't excavate into the ground for any reason in a historic graveyard without consulting with the National Monuments Service. |
| Do clear the site using only hand trimmers or other hand tools | Don't cut back hedges within the nesting bird season which runs from 1st March to 31st August. Doing so is illegal under the Wildlife Act. |

⁸² According to the Irish Church Act of 1869 Barragh was vested by the Church Temporalities Commissioners to Enniscorthy Poor Law Union. Ownership would subsequently have passed to Carlow County Council.



| | |
|---|---|
| Retain healthy trees – choose native species | Don't remove small stones from the graveyard surface. The stones are burial markers or footstones which indicate the presence of historic graves. |
| Leave all hummocks in the ground, they may mark structural and archaeological features | Don't use weedkiller in graveyards. Weedkiller is not recommended due to the effects it has on the flora, fauna and architecture of the historic graveyard. |
| Keep all architectural and sculptural fragments, record their position and report their finding to the National Monuments Service and National Museum of Ireland | Don't attempt to uncover gravestones; doing so constitutes archaeological excavation and should never be attempted without professional advice. It may also cause damage to stones. Do not use wire brushes or sandblasters on gravestones. |
| Consult an ecologist and ensure that the works including vegetation removal from ruins, tree felling will not impact upon bats which are strictly protected under both Domestic and European Legislation. | Do not re-point any masonry without professional advice. Do not try to demolish or remove anything from the site without the approval of the National Monuments Service |

Table 4. Summary of Heritage Council Recommendations for works in historic graveyards⁸³

11.3 Cranavane Holy Well

Cranavane holy well is a nicely maintained site that is clearly very important to the local community. It is well signposted and contains two detailed information signs. It is a heritage asset not just for Kildavin, but also the wider county of Carlow.

Proposed works

A maintenance plan should be put in place for this site to ensure that it doesn't become overgrown and that it remains accessible to the public.

11.4 Wrought Iron gates

At least 20 iron gates were identified in Kildavin during this Heritage Audit. These old gates represent beautiful pieces of vernacular ironwork and are an important part of our rural heritage. However, they are increasingly coming under threat from modern farming practices which require large gate openings. A future project could involve carrying out a comprehensive survey of the wrought iron gates found in Kildavin. This would establish where the gates are located and increase public

⁸³O'Brien 2011, 14



awareness about their importance. This project could also seek to identify the names of local blacksmiths and where their forges were located. Similar schemes have recently been carried out in Westmeath⁸⁴, Galway⁸⁵ and Kilkenny⁸⁶ with support from the Heritage Council.

Proposed works in 2024

Carry out a survey of all the wrought iron gates in Kildavin. This should be a community driven project and could involve local schools as well as organisations such as Macra na Feirme. The Heritage Council's Community Grants Scheme could provide assistance for this project.

11.5 Granite Gate Piers

A distinctive feature of the countryside around Kildavin is the use of granite gate gateposts in many of the fields. However, these granite gateposts are now becoming increasingly rare, as they are often not replaced when gates are widened to facilitate farm machinery. This is unfortunate as the gateposts represent an important part of Kildavin's rural architectural heritage and they should be retained wherever possible. A future project could involve carrying out a comprehensive survey of the granite gate posts found in Kildavin. This would establish where the piers are located and increase public awareness of their importance.

Proposed works in 2024

Carry out a survey of all the granite gate piers found in Kildavin. This should be a community driven project and could involve local schools local as well as organisations such as Macra na Feirme. The Heritage Council's Community Grants Scheme could provide assistance for this project

11.6 Cast iron water pumps

Kildavin contains four late 19th/early 20th cast iron water pumps and these serve as attractive pieces of street furniture, which aesthetically enhance their surroundings.

Proposed future works

These features are an intrinsic part of the Kildavin's history and should be retained wherever possible. A simple maintenance program might involve checking for rust regularly and painting them as appropriate. This could work could carried out under the auspices of the Kildavin Tidy Towns or by a similar grouping.

⁸⁴ <https://www.westmeathindependent.ie/2023/05/22/new-project-inviting-communities-to-record-wrought-iron-gates-in-westmeath/>

⁸⁵ <https://www.ouririshheritage.org/content/archive/topics/miscellaneous/galway-forged-gates-project-launch>

⁸⁶ <https://kilkennyheritage.ie/2015/03/vernacular-forged-wrought-iron-gates-of-county-kilkenny/>



11.7 Vernacular farm-buildings

Vernacular farm-buildings were designed and built by local communities who used traditional materials and resources from the area where the building is located. These distinctive structures are very much in harmony with their local setting and represent an important part of our rural architectural heritage. Kildavin contains a fine collection of vernacular out-buildings and these should be maintained and retained wherever possible. There are two grants available to the owners of these properties, the Heritage Council's Traditional Farm Buildings Grant and the Historic Structures Fund's Vernacular Structures Stream.

Proposed works in 2024

Owners of vernacular out-buildings who wish to carry out repairs can apply for funding under either the Heritage Council's Traditional Farm Buildings Grant or the Historic Structures Fund, Vernacular Structures Stream (subject to eligibility criteria).

11.8 Traditional stone walls

Old stone walls are an integral part of the built heritage of County Carlow and Kildavin has particularly high density of them, many of which probably date to the 19th century. For instance, good stretches of stone wall are found in Kilbride, Deerpark Old, Kildavin village, and Kilbrannish. Not only are these structures testimony to the skilled craftsmen who built them they are also an important habitat for many plants and insects.

Proposed Future Works

The stone walls add great character to Kildavin and should be retained and maintained wherever possible. Where repairs are required, these should be carried out according to traditional building methods, the use of lime mortar, etc.

11.9 Field Names Project

Kildavin is rural locality with a rich farming tradition. The landscape is covered in fields of various sizes and most of these have names. These names may derive from the topography of the land, or from the owners, or may describe the purpose of the field, its size or may relate to some event that took place in the field. Together these names tell us much about the history and heritage of an area and people who have lived there for generations. However, these names are increasingly being lost as land changes ownership, field boundaries are removed and members of the older generations pass on. An interesting and informative project would be to record and map these old fieldnames before they are lost. Similar projects have recently been carried out in counties such Meath, Kilkenny, Louth and Westmeath.

Proposed works



This project should be carried out in consultation with Carlow County Council's Heritage officer who can give practical advice on how the survey should be carried out. Funding assistance may be provided by the Heritage Council's Community Grants Scheme.

11.10 Archaeological Cert/Pamphlet

The Heritage Audit identified several archaeological sites which have been damaged or removed in the recent past. This was most likely because the landowners did not realise the significance of the monuments found on their land. A possible solution to this problem would be to produce an illustrated cert/pamphlet for each of the 11 upstanding RMPs which survive in Kildavin. This could then be delivered to the relevant landowners. The cert should have a positive message, which would encourage the landowners to protect and maintain the sites found on their property. It could describe the monument, highlight its importance, and detail any relevant statutory protection the site is afforded.

Proposed works in 2024

Produce an illustrated cert/pamphlet, which would be delivered to the relevant landowners. Carlow County Council's Heritage Officer's advice should be sought when creating this cert/pamphlet.



12. Conclusion

This Audit revealed that Kildavin/Barragh has a rich archaeological heritage. It contains at least thirty recorded monuments, which range in date from the Bronze Age to the Late Medieval period. Eleven of these monuments are still upstanding and these include sites such as prehistoric barrows, early medieval ringforts, medieval church sites and holy wells. Of particular interest are the medieval church at Barragh and the holy well at Cranavane/Ballinvally, both of which represent significant heritage assets. In addition, the area has a rich vernacular heritage as seen by the many traditional farm buildings, stone walls, wrought iron gates and granite piers which dot the landscape.

These monuments and sites give Kildavin its own unique character and are an important resource for the locality if harnessed correctly. If the proposals outlined in Section 11 are followed the enhancement of these assets will benefit the wider community as well as visitors to the area. It is recommended that a phased plan of action is introduced with each section forming a discrete element which can be undertaken when funding is available.

It is hoped that the benefits of understanding and promoting the heritage of Kildavin will lead to an increase in visitors to the area. Heritage actions can also enhance community spirit by bringing people of diverse backgrounds together to work on various projects which will enhance the cultural and economic development of Kildavin.

The recommendations made here follow government-issued advice from the following documents; 'Guidance for the Care, conservation and Recording of Historic Graveyards' issued by The Heritage Council (2011) and 'Architectural Heritage Protection – Guidelines for Planning Authorities' issued by the Department of Arts, Heritage & Gaeltacht (2011).

As all the monuments are RMP sites they are protected under the National Monuments Acts (1930-2014). All phases of this plan will therefore require the consent of the National Monuments Service of the Department of Culture, Heritage & Gaeltacht. This plan must be submitted to the National Monuments Service along with a Method Statement for Works and all works should be monitored under licence by a suitably qualified archaeologist.



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